The Dissertation Committee for Timothy James Miller
certifies that this is the approved version of the following dissertation:

ATTRIBUTES OF AN EFFECTIVE

ELEMENTARY BILINGUAL EDUCATION PROGRAM:

AN EXAMINATION OF

ADMINISTRATOR, TEACHER, AND PARENT PERCEPTIONS

Committee:

_____
Martha N. Ovando, Supervisor

_____
Norma Cantú

_____
Nolan Estes

_____
Jeffrey Goldhorn

_____
Norvell Northcutt

ATTRIBUTES OF AN EFFECTIVE

ELEMENTARY BILINGUAL EDUCATION PROGRAM:

AN EXAMINATION OF

ADMINISTRATOR, TEACHER, AND PARENT PERCEPTIONS


by


**Timothy James Miller, B.A.; M.A.T.; M.Ed.**


**Dissertation**

Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School of

The University of Texas at Austin

in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements

for the Degree of

**Doctor of Education**


The University of Texas at Austin

August 2006

DEDICATION


This manuscript is dedicated

in memory of my mother

Donna Marie Miller,

who was my first teacher

and inspired me to teach others.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ATTRIBUTES OF AN EFFECTIVE

ELEMENTARY BILINGUAL EDUCATION PROGRAM:

AN EXAMINATION OF

ADMINISTRATOR, TEACHER, AND PARENT PERCEPTIONS


Publication No. _____

Timothy James Miller, Ed.D.

The University of Texas at Austin, 2006


Supervisor: Martha N. Ovando

This study examined the perceptions of administrators, teachers, and parents regarding the attributes of an effective elementary bilingual education program. The following research questions were the focus of this study: (1) What are the perceived attributes of an effective elementary bilingual education program according to parents of elementary bilingual education students, elementary bilingual education teachers, principals of schools with elementary bilingual education programs, the district administrator of the bilingual education program, and the district superintendent? (2) How are the perceived attributes similar or different between administrators, teachers, and parents?

Utilizing a qualitative multiple case study with a critical race theory approach, surveys, direct observations, focus group interviews, individual interviews, and document

reviews were used to collect data in this research study. Open, axial, and selective coding were used to analyze the qualitative data that was collected.

This study supported the majority of the components that made up the attributes of effective elementary bilingual education programs that have been identified through current research. These seven attributes included: (a) program articulation; (b) parental and community involvement; (c) district, school, and classroom climate; (d) quality people; (e) curriculum and instruction; (f) leadership, vision, and goals; and (g) organization, accountability, and assessment.

This study also supplemented the existing research with additional themes that emerged from the individual interviews, surveys, and focus group interviews. These emergent themes included: (a) materials, (b) staffing, (c), translation of materials (d) funding, (e) socioeconomic status, (f) homework, (g) educational systems, and (h) class size.

The perceptions of administrators, teachers, and parents are more different than similar regarding the most prevalent, confirming, and concerning attributes and emergent themes. However, the perceptions are more similar than different regarding the least prevalent attributes and emergent themes. The results of this study can assist educational leaders in the formulation of effective policy and practice to create equity and excellence for all students.

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CHAPTER I: RATIONALE

Introduction

Recent changes in student demographics have prompted researchers and practitioners to examine how public schools can improve teaching, learning, and academic achievement for students in special populations (August & Hakuta, 1998; Howard, Sugarman, & Christian, 2003; Rennie, 1993; Robledo Montecel, Cortez, & Cortez, 2002). These special populations include ethnic minorities, economically disadvantaged students, and students identified as English Language Learners. In Texas, English Language Learners are primarily Hispanic, are often economically disadvantaged, and are one of the lowest performing student groups on state assessments of academic achievement (TEA, 2003).

While most research studies have focused on what individual schools have done to successfully educate increasing numbers of English Language Learners (Alanís, 2000; TEA, 2000b), attention should also be focused on the changes that must occur at the district level to create equity and excellence for all students. Since the overwhelming majority of English Language Learners in Texas are members of a particular race and class, critical race theory can be used to examine additional attributes that may influence the academic success of English Language Learners. Therefore, additional research is needed to examine the similarities or differences between the perceptions of administrators, teachers, and parents regarding the attributes of an effective elementary bilingual education program.

Since 1973, the state of Texas has appropriated funding for a bilingual education program to support English Language Learners. According to the Texas Administrative

Code (TEA, 1998), every student in the state who has a home language other than English and who is identified as an English Language Learner shall be provided with a full opportunity to participate in a bilingual or English as a Second Language (ESL) education program. It is the responsibility of each district to:

(a) identify English Language Learners based on criteria established by the state,
(b) provide bilingual and ESL education programs as integral parts of the regular instructional program,
(c) seek certified teaching personnel to ensure that English Language Learners are afforded full opportunity to master the essential skills and knowledge required by the state, and
(d) assess achievement for essential skills and knowledge to ensure accountability for English Language Learners and the schools that serve them (TEA, 1998).

The goal of a bilingual and ESL education program in Texas is to enable English Language Learners to become competent in the comprehension, speaking, reading, and composition of the English language through the development of literacy and academic skills (TEA, 1998). These skills can be taught either in the primary language and English (for two-way immersion and transitional bilingual education programs) or through the integrated use of second language methodology (for structured immersion and ESL education programs). The creation of bilingual education programs has fueled debate and research to determine the advantages and disadvantages of bilingual education, the most appropriate models of bilingual education, and the attributes of effective elementary bilingual education programs. A review of the literature suggests that:

1. Bilingual education is beneficial to English Language Learners (Cummins, 1999; Krashen, 2000).
2. The most appropriate model depends on the context of the community (August & Hakuta, 1998)
3. One of the most important attributes of an effective elementary bilingual education program is educational leadership (Robledo Montecel, Cortez, & Cortez, 2002; Villarreal & Solís, 1998).

The importance of leadership cannot be overstated in an environment where the goal is that every student will achieve at high levels.

In order to reach this goal of student success, superintendents need to take a systemic approach for district, school, and classroom decision-making and communications. Although the superintendent has the ultimate responsibility to ensure that the mission of the district is clear and that the district goals are aligned with that mission, the refinement of the action plans that make that vision a reality are often the result of a distributive process of leadership (Jacoby, 2003). This process builds the leadership capacity of central office staff, principals, and teachers. Superintendents play two important roles in this distributive process. The first role of the superintendent is to engage in dialogue with the school board, parents, and other members of the community regarding the belief that all students in the school system have the capability to succeed (Jacoby, 2003). By seeking ongoing interaction with parents and community members whose actions align with this belief, superintendents can develop sincere support and ownership with stakeholders (Robledo Montecel, Cortez, Cortez, & Villarreal, 2002; Villarreal & Solís, 1998). The second role of the superintendent is to communicate to every school district employee how important he or she is in the success of students (Jacoby, 2003). Research studies on the attributes of effective elementary bilingual education programs highlight the power of the inclusive educational community in making all students successful learners. (Goldenberg & Gallimore, 1991; Lein, Johnson, & Ragland, 1997). Everyone who might possibly come into contact with a student is a partner in ensuring that student's academic success.

This chapter presents an overview of a study that examined the perceptions of administrators, teachers, and parents regarding the attributes of an effective elementary bilingual education program. It begins with the statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, and the research questions that were the focus of this study. The chapter then briefly describes the methodology and procedures that were used in this study, the delimitations and limitations of this study, and the assumptions related to this study. The chapter concludes with the significance of this study and a glossary of terms used in this study.

Statement of the Problem

One of the most significant demographic changes in United States public schools during the past 25 years has been the growth in the number of students identified as English Language Learners. From 1979 to 1999, the overall student population increased by 6% while the percentage of students who spoke a language other than English at home increased by 118% (Wirt et al., 2003). In the 2000-2001 school year, over 4.5 million English Language Learners were enrolled in public schools nationwide with California, Florida, New York, and Texas enrolling the majority (56%) of English Language Learners. Texas enrolled the second largest number of English Language Learners (570,022) and had the fourth highest percentage of English Language Learners (14%) (Kindler, 2002). This research study focused on a large, urban, and diverse school district in Texas. Therefore, a brief description of the shifting demographics and widening achievements gaps in the state of Texas is necessary to provide the context for the study.

An analysis for a six-year period between 1992 and 1998 indicates that Texas public schools experienced an increase of 44% in the English Language Learner population (Munoz & Clavijo, 2000). The 1997-1998 enrollment figures for each of the 20 education service centers in the state indicate that approximately 85% of all new English Language Learner enrollment occurred in the following areas: Edinburg, Houston, Richardson (including the Dallas Metroplex), Fort Worth, El Paso, and San Antonio (TEA, 2000a). While responses to teacher surveys administered during the development of the Reading Proficiency Tests in English (RPTE) suggest that there are more than 100 different home languages represented in the Texas English Language Learner population, Texas Education Agency (TEA) Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) data from the 1999-2000 school year indicates that more than 90% of Texas English Language Learners speak Spanish as their primary language (TEA, 2000a). In the 2001-2002 school year, 93% of English Language Learners in Texas were Hispanic and 87% were economically disadvantaged (TEA, 2003). By the year 2040, the Texas English Language Learner population is projected to rise another 188% with Hispanics making up 94% of that population (Murdock et al., 2002). Unfortunately, this increase in student enrollment parallels a widening achievement gap between English Language Learners and native English speaking students.

The percentage of fifth grade English Language Learners meeting minimum expectations on the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) reading and mathematics tests increased 46% from 1994 through 2002 (TEA, 2002). While this growth represents the largest increase for any grade level tested and resulted in 72% of

English Language Learners meeting the minimum expectations in 2002, 92% of native English speaking students met minimum expectations on the same tests. The achievement gap grew at the eighth grade level in 2002, when 83% of native English speaking students met minimum expectations on all tests while only 35% of English Language Learners met minimum expectations on the same tests.

In 2003, the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) replaced the TAAS as the instrument used to assess the academic achievement of students in Texas. Unfortunately, the results of the 2003 TAKS indicate that a similar achievement gap exists in reading. While 79% of fifth graders and 88% of eighth graders identified as native English speakers passed the reading TAKS, only 48% of fifth graders and 45% of eighth graders identified as English Language Learners passed the same test (TEA, 2003). This gap is especially significant because the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001 holds states accountable for improving both the English language proficiency and academic achievement of English Language Learners. Districts that do not comply with the NCLB Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) requirement may lose the federal funding that serves as one of the supplementary financial sources for bilingual education. If educational leaders are unable to find ways to minimize this achievement gap, students, schools, and society may soon be faced with dire economic, political, and social consequences. This study provided additional research on the critical factors that must be addressed by educational leaders in order to provide excellent and equitable educational experiences for English Language Learners.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the perceptions of administrators,

teachers, and parents regarding the attributes of an effective elementary bilingual

education program. An effective elementary bilingual education program has been

defined as a program within a school where:

    (a) more than 40% of the students were identified as English Language Learners,
    (b) more than 50% of the students were identified as economically disadvantaged,
    (c) no students were exempted from taking the English or Spanish TAKS due to
        language issues, and
    (d) the campus met the criteria for a rating of either Recognized or Exemplary in the
        Texas Academic Excellence Indicator System (TEA, 2000b).

However, it was not necessary for the administrators, teachers, and parents to be

stakeholders in an elementary bilingual education program that met this definition of

effectiveness. Rather, the focus of this study was the examination of the attributes that the

stakeholders perceived to be important to the relative effectiveness of their program.

Elementary bilingual education was the focus of this study because researchers

have found that English Language Learners do better academically over the long-term if

they participate in effective elementary bilingual education programs at the start of their

school careers (Strozer, 1994; Thomas & Collier, 2001). The salient attributes of

effective elementary bilingual education programs have been identified by researchers in

various isolated studies (August & Hakuta, 1998; Howard et al., 2003; Rennie, 1993;

Robledo Montecel, Cortez, & Cortez, 2002). These attributes were holistically combined

in this study to provide a comprehensive framework through which the perceptions of the

administrators, teachers, and parents were examined. In addition, educational leadership

has been shown to have a positive effect on student achievement (Leithwood, Louis,

Anderson, & Wahlstrom, 2004; Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2005). By examining the perceptions of administrators, teachers, and parents regarding the factors that influence the early academic achievement of English Language Learners, the results of this study can assist educational leaders in the formulation of effective policy and practice to create equity and excellence for all students.

## Research Questions

The following research questions were the focus of this study:

1. What are the perceived attributes of an effective elementary bilingual education program according to parents of elementary bilingual education students, elementary bilingual education teachers, principals of schools with elementary bilingual education programs, the district administrator of the bilingual education program, and the district superintendent?

2. How are the perceived attributes similar or different between administrators, teachers, and parents?

## Methodology

This study employed critical race theory as the methodological and theoretical framework. Guba and Lincoln (1994) contend that the nature of reality is interpreted as something that has been contextually shaped over time and history by a series of social, political, cultural, and economic factors. As a result of this contextual construction of reality, Lopez (2003) argues that educational leaders "must have a thorough

understanding of political systems, intergovernmental relations, micropolitics, community participation, interest groups, and theories of power and conflict to effectively do their job" (p. 72). Critical race theory is unique because its challenge to the ethnic and socioeconomic structures of educational inequality is accompanied by its approach to creating more equitable conditions in schools and society (Yosso, 2002). Critical race theory is an appropriate framework for analyzing the perceptions of administrators, teachers, and parents regarding the attributes of an effective elementary bilingual education program because the majority of English Language Learners in Texas are from the Hispanic ethnic group and the economically disadvantaged socioeconomic class (TEA, 2003).

A collective case study approach (Stake, 2000) involving purposeful sampling (Ritchie, Lewis, & Elam, 2003) was used as the design in this research study. A district was selected that was large (more than 50,000 students were enrolled), urban (resided in a county with populations of 650,000 or more), and had a diverse population of students (no ethnic group represented more than 50% of the student population). Elementary schools in the district that had bilingual education programs made up the sample of participating schools.

Parents or guardians of students who had been enrolled in the district's elementary bilingual education program for at least the last three years were asked to participate voluntarily in this study. Teachers who had taught in an elementary bilingual education classroom in the district for at least the last three years were asked to participate voluntarily in this study. Principals of elementary schools that had bilingual

educations programs, the administrator of the district bilingual education program, and the superintendent of the district were also asked to participate voluntarily in this study.

Surveys, direct observations, focus group interviews, individual interviews, and document reviews were used to collect data in this research study. A questionnaire from the *Texas Successful School Study* (TEA, 2000b) was adapted and used to collect the perceptions of selected administrators, teachers, and parents regarding the attributes of an effective elementary bilingual education program. Open, axial, and selective coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1990) were used to analyze the qualitative data that was collected.

Direct observations of the classrooms of participating teachers and document reviews of student achievement and demographic data were used to provide the contextual background for the people and places that were part of the study. Examples of student achievement data included scores on standardized achievement assessments such as the TAKS. Examples of demographic data included gender, ethnic, economic, and linguistic characteristics of the students, administrators, teachers, and parents. Descriptive statistics and graphical analysis were used to examine the quantitative aspects of the observations and document reviews. The following sections describe the limitations, delimitations, and assumptions that were indicative of the quality measures related to this study.

Limitations

This qualitative study had several potential limitations:

1.  Teachers who had taught fewer than three years in the elementary bilingual education program in the district were excluded from the sample. Since the teacher participants in this study were purposefully sampled and asked to participate voluntarily, there may have been a differential selection effect that could have caused the results of the research to be skewed toward those teachers who were selected and volunteered to participate.

2.  Parents and guardians of students who had been enrolled in the district's elementary bilingual education program for less than three years were excluded from the sample. Since the parent participants in this study were purposefully sampled and asked to participate voluntarily, there may have been a differential selection effect that could have caused the results of the research to be skewed toward those parents who were selected and volunteered to participate.

3.  The results of the study may not be generalized or transferred to other schools and districts due to the purposeful sampling used in this study. While other schools and districts that are similar in size and demographics may find resemblance with this study, the findings of this research are expected to apply specifically only to the district that was the focus of this study.

Delimitations

This qualitative study had several potential delimitations:

1. The focus of the study was only on the perceptions of administrators, teachers, and parents regarding the attributes of an effective elementary bilingual education program.

2. This study did not include an evaluation of the elementary bilingual education program of the district or of any campus.

3. This study did not include an evaluation of the performance of the elementary bilingual education teachers or administrators.

Assumptions

There were several assumptions that identified the external influences that were potential risks to the successful implementation of this study:

1. It was assumed that the researcher was able to identify enough participants who voluntarily agreed to be surveyed, observed, and/or interviewed.

2. It was assumed that the selected teachers voluntarily agreed to complete the survey, had a good understanding of the elementary bilingual education program, honestly answered the questions posed on the survey, and acted normally during classroom observations.

3. It was assumed that the selected administrators and parents voluntarily agreed to be interviewed, had a good understanding of the elementary bilingual education

program, and honestly answered the questions posed in the individual and focus group interviews.

## Significance of the Study

This study was significant for several reasons. First, information about the social, cultural, and economic contexts that can an influence elementary bilingual education program was collected. Second, by way of an examination of the data collected through the perspective of critical race theory, the voices of the administrators, teachers, and parents who were responsible for the education of one of the most disadvantaged student populations was added to the discourse of bilingual education research. Third, the study offered a framework that researchers of schools and districts can employ to continue the examination of data to support the equitable and excellent education of English Language Learners.

## Glossary of Terms

The operational definitions of the following terms were used in this study:

**Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS)** – The AEIS annually reports a wide range of information on the performance of students in each school and district in Texas every year. Performance on each of these indicators is disaggregated by ethnicity, gender, special education, socioeconomic status, and language status. The reports also provide extensive information on school and district staff, finances, programs and demographics (TEA, 2004a).

**Academic Success** – Academic success was defined as meeting the minimum expectations on the TAAS or TAKS.

**Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)** – AYP is an individual state's measure of yearly progress toward achieving state academic standards. AYP is the minimum level of improvement that states, school districts, and schools must achieve each year (TEA, 2004a).

**African American (AA)** – African American was defined as a non-Hispanic person having origins in any of the Black racial groups of Africa (TEA, 2005a).

**Economically Disadvantaged (ED)** – Students are classified as economically disadvantaged if they qualify for free or reduced-price lunch or other public assistance (TEA, 2004a).

**Elementary Bilingual Education Program –** An elementary bilingual education program enables English Language Learners to become competent in the comprehension, speaking, reading, and composition of the English language through the development of literacy and academic skills (TEA, 1998) either in the primary language and English (for two-way immersion and transitional bilingual education) or through the integrated use of second language methodology (for structured immersion and ESL education).

**Effective Bilingual Education Program** – In the *Texas Successful School Study* (TEA, 2000b), effective schools had these characteristics:

> (a) more than 40% of the students were identified as English Language Learners,
> (b) more than 50% of the students were identified as economically disadvantaged,
> (c) no students were exempted from taking the English or Spanish TAAS due to language issues, and
> (d) schools met the criteria for a rating of either Recognized or Exemplary in the Texas school accountability system.

**English as a Second Language (ESL)** – In an ESL program, English Language Learners receive specified periods of instruction aimed at the development of English language skills, with a primary focus on grammar, vocabulary, and communication rather than academic content (August & Hakuta, 1998).

**English Language Learner (ELL)** – An English Language Learner is a student whose first language is not English and who is in the process of learning English (TEA, 2004a).

**Hispanic** – Hispanic was defined as a person of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race (TEA, 2005a).

**Late-Exit Bilingual Education –** Most students in the program are English Language Learners. They receive the majority of instruction in the first language in the early years of the program. In the later years of the program, they receive the majority of instruction in English. The goal of the program is to transition to English while maintaining the first language. (August & Hakuta, 1998).

**Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS)** – PEIMS is a statewide data management system for public education information in Texas. Currently, the major categories of data collected are: organization data, budget data, financial data, staff data, student demographic and program participation data, student attendance and course completion data, graduate data, and dropout data (TEA, 2004a).

**Reading Proficiency Tests in English (RPTE)** – These tests are designed to measure annual growth in the English reading proficiency of English Language Learners. The RPTE is constructed with items from each of three levels of proficiency: Beginning, Intermediate, and Advanced. English Language Learners in third through twelfth grades are required to take the RPTE until they achieve advanced proficiency. Once they achieve a rating of Advanced they take the TAKS (English or Spanish) in subsequent years (TEA, 2004a).

**Structured Immersion (SI)** – All students in the program are English Language Learners, who are usually, though not always, from different language backgrounds. They receive instruction in English, with an attempt made to adjust the level of English so subject matter is comprehensible. Typically, there is no native language support (August & Hakuta, 1998).

**State Developed Alternative Assessment (SDAA)** – The SDAA is a test that assesses special education students in third through eighth grade who are receiving instruction in the TEKS but for whom TAKS is not an appropriate measure of their academic progress. SDAA tests are given in the areas of reading, writing, and mathematics (TEA, 2004a).

**Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS)** – The TAAS was the state-mandated assessment of student performance given to Texas public school students from 1990 through 2002 (TEA, 2004a).

**Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS)** – The TAKS is a comprehensive testing program for Texas public school students in grades 3-11 and was administered for the first time in 2003. The TAKS is designed to measure to what extent a student has learned, understood, and is able to apply the important concepts and skills expected at each tested grade level. Every TAKS test is directly linked to the TEKS curriculum (TEA, 2004a).

**Texas Education Agency (TEA)** – The TEA is comprised of the Commissioner of Education and agency staff. The mission of the TEA is to provide leadership, guidance, and resources to help schools meet the educational needs of all students. The mission will be achieved by providing education system leadership and creating a system of accountability for excellence (TEA, 2004b).

**Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS)** – The TEKS is the state-mandated curriculum for Texas public school students. Essential knowledge and skills taught at each grade build upon the material learned in previous grades (TEA, 2004a).

**Texas Observation Protocol (TOP)** – TOP enables teachers to holistically rate each English Language Learner's English language proficiency based on classroom observations and daily interactions. A benchmark administration of TOP was conducted in spring 2004. TOP was fully implemented in spring 2005 (TEA, 2005b).

**Transitional Bilingual Education (TBE)** – Most students in the program are English

Language Learners. They receive some degree of instruction in the native language.

However, the goal of the program is to transition to English as quickly as possible, so that

even within the program, there is a shift toward using primarily English (August &

Hakuta, 1998).

**Two-Way Immersion (TWI)** – A portion of the students (ideally half) in these programs

are native speakers of English, and the others are English Language Learners from the

same non-English language group. The goal of the program is to develop proficiency in

both languages for both groups of students (August & Hakuta, 1998).

**White** – White was defined as a non-Hispanic person having origins in any of the

original peoples of Europe, North Africa, or the Middle East (TEA, 2005a).


Summary

　　　　The purpose of this chapter was to provide an overview of a research study of the

perceptions of administrators, teachers, and parents regarding the attributes of an

effective elementary bilingual education program. This chapter presented the statement of

the problem, the purpose of this study, and the research questions that were the focus of

this study. The chapter then briefly described the methodology and procedures that were

used in this study, the delimitations and limitations of this study, and the assumptions

related to this study. The chapter concluded with the significance of the study and a

glossary of terms used in the study. In Chapter II, a review of the literature associated

with the areas of research that are relevant to this study are presented.

CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF LITERATURE


Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to present the literature associated with the areas of research related to the perceptions of administrators, teachers, and parents regarding the attributes of an effective elementary bilingual education program. This chapter is divided into two sections. The first section contains a restatement of the purpose of this study, the research questions, a brief history of bilingual education in Texas, and a description of the most common elementary bilingual education program models. The second section of the chapter reviews the research literature and is presented in six parts.

The first part of the literature review chronologically describes general research on bilingual education. This general review provides an overview of what researchers have concluded about the general advantages and disadvantages of bilingual education. The second part of the literature review describes comparative research that distinguishes between different types of program models. This comparative review provides more specific information related to what researchers have concluded about the strengths and weaknesses of particular programs. The third part of the literature review presents the major critiques of bilingual education research. The fourth part of the literature review describes the research that has focused on the attributes of effective elementary bilingual education programs. The dissemination and application of these attributes of effective elementary bilingual education programs may assist other districts as they seek to improve their own elementary bilingual education programs.

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The fifth part of the literature review describes research that has focused on the effects of educational leadership on student achievement. While there is limited research on the effects of educational leadership on the academic achievement of English Language Learners, the results of this study will add to the body of knowledge related to educational leadership as an attribute of effective elementary bilingual education programs. The final part of the literature review describes the five major tenets of critical race theory. Critical race theory was used as the methodological and theoretical framework of this study because it is an "innovative way for framing discussions about social justice and democracy and the role of education in reproducing or interrupting current practices" (Ladson-Billings, 1998, p. 9). By reviewing the literature associated with elementary bilingual education, educational leadership, and critical race theory, the reader will have a better understanding of the areas investigated.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the perceptions of administrators, teachers, and parents regarding the attributes of an effective elementary bilingual education program. An effective elementary bilingual education program has been defined as a program within a school where:

(a) more than 40% of the students were identified as English Language Learners,
(b) more than 50% of the students were identified as economically disadvantaged,
(c) no students were exempted from taking the English or Spanish TAKS due to language issues, and
(d) the school met the criteria for a rating of either Recognized or Exemplary in the Texas Academic Excellence Indicator System (TEA, 2000b).

However, it was not necessary for the administrators, teachers, and parents to be stakeholders in an elementary bilingual education program that met this definition of effectiveness. Rather, the focus of this study was the examination of the attributes that the stakeholders perceived to be important to the relative effectiveness of their program.

Elementary bilingual education was the focus of this study because researchers have found that English Language Learners do better academically over the long-term if they participate in effective elementary bilingual education programs at the start of their school careers (Strozer, 1994; Thomas & Collier, 2001). The salient attributes of effective elementary bilingual education programs have been identified by researchers in various isolated studies (August & Hakuta, 1998; Howard et al., 2003; Rennie, 1993; Robledo Montecel, Cortez, & Cortez, 2002). These attributes were holistically combined in this study to provide a comprehensive framework through which the perceptions of the administrators, teachers, and parents were examined. In addition, educational leadership has been shown to have a positive effect on student achievement (Leithwood et al., 2004; Marzano et al., 2005). Through an examination of the perceptions of administrators, teachers, and parents regarding the factors that influence the early academic achievement of English Language Learners, the results of this study can assist educational leaders in the formulation of effective policy and practice to create equity and excellence for all students.

Research Questions

The following research questions were the focus of this study:

1.  What are the perceived attributes of an effective elementary bilingual education program according to parents of elementary bilingual education students, elementary bilingual education teachers, principals of schools with elementary bilingual education programs, the district administrator of the bilingual education program, and the district superintendent?

2.  How are the perceived attributes similar or different between administrators, teachers, and parents?

History of Bilingual Education

The first bilingual education program in the United States was created in Florida in 1963 when the Kennedy Administration granted federal funds to educate the children of Cuban refugees who had fled their country after Fidel Castro came into power. In 1964, Laredo United Consolidated School District and San Antonio Independent School District were two of the first Texas districts to initiate bilingual education programs. By the time Title VII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (the Bilingual Education Act of 1968) was signed, Texas had 16 school districts serving more than 10,000 students (Rodriguez, 2002). In 1969, House Bill 103 repealed the "English Only" statute of 1918 and allowed, but did not require or fund, school districts in Texas to provide bilingual education through grade six (TEA, 2000b).

On May 25, 1970, the Office for Civil Rights issued a memorandum to all federally funded school districts with more than 5% of national origin-minority group children and stipulated:

> where inability to speak and understand the English language excludes national origin-minority group children from effective participation in the education program offered by a school district, the district must take affirmative steps to rectify the language deficiency in order to open its instructional program to these students (OCR, 1970, p. 1).

Three years later, Senate Bill 121 (the Texas Bilingual Education and Training Act of 1973) was signed into law. This legislation appropriated funding for the education of English Language Learners in grades one through six. The United States Supreme Court decision in *Lau v. Nichols*, the enactment of the Equal Educational Opportunity Act, and the reenactment of the Bilingual Education Act in 1974 were prime catalysts for the expansion of bilingual and English as a Second Language (ESL) education programs throughout the country. Over the next four years, House Bill 1126 (1975) and the State Board of Education's *Texas State Plan for Bilingual Education* (1978) would fund bilingual education for English Language Learners in kindergarten through third grade. These two policies would also represent an unfunded mandate to provide ESL services in grades K-12 for those English Language Learners who did not qualify for bilingual education services.

In 1981, the District Court ruling in *United States v. State of Texas* instructed the Texas Education Agency (TEA) to phase-in mandatory bilingual education in kindergarten through twelfth grade. This decision outlined specific requirements that included three-year monitoring cycles, identification of English Language Learners, a

language survey for students entering school, and the need for exit criteria for the bilingual education program (TEA, 2000a). Later that same year, Senate Bill 477 strengthened the guidelines necessary to implement the state bilingual plan and established the Language Proficiency Assessment Committees (LPAC). This action caused the United States Court of Appeals to reverse the previous judgment of *United States v. State of Texas* in 1982. During a special session in the summer of 1984, the Texas Legislature passed sweeping education reforms in HB 72 (the Education Reform Act). This legislation dramatically improved state funding for bilingual education and began a decade of bilingual education policy and initiatives in areas such as curriculum and assessment. In 1995, the Texas Legislature passed a major rewrite of Texas public education laws called Senate Bill 1 that generated the current Texas Education Code (Chapter 29.051-064) and Texas Administrative Code (Chapter 89.1201-1265). These chapters describe the bilingual education and special language programs that are currently used in Texas public schools.

According to the Texas Administrative Code (TEA, 1998), every student who has a home language other than English and who is identified as an English Language Learner shall be provided with a full opportunity to participate in a bilingual or ESL education program. It is the responsibility of each district to:

- (a) identify English Language Learners based on criteria established by the state,
- (b) provide bilingual and ESL education programs as integral parts of the regular instructional program,
- (c) seek certified teaching personnel to ensure that English Language Learners are afforded full opportunity to master the essential skills and knowledge required by the state, and
- (d) assess achievement for essential skills and knowledge to ensure accountability for English Language Learners and the schools that serve them (TEA, 1998).

The goal of a Texas bilingual and ESL education program is to enable English Language

Learners to become competent in the comprehension, speaking, reading, and composition

of the English language through the development of literacy and academic skills (TEA,

1998), either in the primary language and English (for two-way immersion and

transitional bilingual education) or through the integrated use of second language

methodology (for structured immersion and ESL education). Students who indicate that a

language other than English is spoken at home are assessed to determine their eligibility

for bilingual or ESL education services. After meeting with an LPAC, parents have the

option of accepting or refusing bilingual or ESL services if their child qualifies for them.

      In order to meet the needs of English Language Learners, four bilingual education

program models are offered at the elementary level in Texas: ESL, structured immersion,

transitional bilingual education, and two-way immersion. In ESL programs, English

Language Learners receive specified periods of instruction aimed at the development of

English language skills, with a primary focus on grammar, vocabulary, and

communication rather than academic content (August & Hakuta, 1998). In structured

immersion programs, all students in the program are English Language Learners and are

usually, though not always, from different language backgrounds. They receive

instruction in English, with an attempt made to adjust the level of English so subject

matter is comprehensible. Typically, there is no native language support (August &

Hakuta, 1998). In transitional bilingual education programs, most students in the program

are English Language Learners. They receive some degree of instruction in the native

language. However, the goal of the program is to transition the students to English as

quickly as possible, so that even within the program, there is a shift toward using primarily English (August & Hakuta, 1998). In two-way immersion programs, half of the students are native speakers of English and the other half are English Language Learners who share the same native language. The goal of the program is to develop proficiency in both languages for both groups of students (August & Hakuta, 1998). All of the different types of bilingual education programs have been the focus of research that has either compared bilingual education programs to non-bilingual education programs or compared bilingual education programs to each other. The results of this research are presented in the following section.

Review of Relevant Research

This section of the chapter will review the areas of relevant research associated with the perceptions of administrators, teachers, and parents regarding the attributes of an effective elementary bilingual education program. The first part of this section will chronologically review the general advantages and disadvantages of bilingual education. The second part of this section will review the strengths and weaknesses of different types of elementary bilingual education programs. The third part of this section will summarize the major critiques of bilingual research. The fourth part of this section will review the attributes of effective elementary bilingual education programs. The fifth part of the literature review describes research that has focused on the effect of educational leadership on student achievement. The final part of the literature review describes the five major tenets of critical race theory.

*General Bilingual Education Research*

One of the first major bilingual education research studies was conducted by Zappert and Cruz (1977) to examine the question, "Does bilingual education work?" They noted that earlier reviews on bilingual education had generally taken a chronological, geographical, or comparative approach. Using the third approach, they reviewed 184 project evaluations and research studies and accepted 66 evaluations and studies for meeting standards of sound empirical research. There were 38 (58%) positive outcomes for the experimental groups, 27 (41%) neutral outcomes, and 1 (1%) negative outcome. Zappert and Cruz concluded there was strong support for the positive effects of bilingual education on English Language Learners.

A study by Troike (1978) also found that bilingual education programs can produce quality outcomes. He cited 12 Title VII programs and 5 additional bilingual education programs as evidence of the positive effects of bilingual education. Troike found that students taught through a minority language for part of the school day experienced an initial lag in English skills that usually disappeared by the middle grades of elementary school. In many cases, the students educated in a bilingual program demonstrated superior performance by the end of elementary school, in comparison to matched students educated in a monolingual program. Troike also found that immigrants who received at least two to three years of home language instruction before leaving their home country learned English better than those immigrants who received all their schooling in English.

Baker and de Kanter (1983) set out to examine "whether the federal government's emphasis on transitional bilingual education is justified in the light of what is known about the effects of bilingual education" (p. 28). They reviewed 28 studies of programs designed for English Language Learners that the researchers considered methodologically sound. Based on their review, Baker and de Kanter found that "the case for the effectiveness of transitional bilingual education is so weak that exclusive reliance on this instruction method is clearly not justified" (p. 1). Baker and de Kanter concluded that regular education programs were more beneficial for English Language Learners.

Willig (1985) conducted a meta-analysis of the Baker and de Kanter (1983) study. She found that their interpretation of whether studies had positive or negative results was sometimes unreliable. She also determined that a number of studies were lacking an adequate methodological design. While Willig suggested positive effects for bilingual education, she did not compare bilingual education programs with other bilingual education programs, but only contrasted program versus no-program studies.

The *National Longitudinal Evaluation of the Effectiveness of Services for Language Minority Limited English Proficient Students*, referred to as the *Longitudinal Study*, attempted to determine the relative effectiveness of programs for English Language Learners (Burkheimer, Conger, Dunteman, Elliott, & Mowbray, 1989). The major findings are summarized as follows:

1. Too heavy a concentration in any one aspect of the English Language Learner's education can detract from achievement in other areas.
2. The yearly achievement of English Language Learners in math and language arts is facilitated by different approaches, depending on student background factors.
3. In the later grades, proficiency in mathematics when tested in English seems to require proficiency in English (Burkheimer et al., 1989).

The results of the *Longitudinal Study* suggest that while English proficiency is important, there needs to be a balanced approach to educating English Language Learners so that they retain their first language and emerge from the education system biliterate.

August and Hakuta (1998) led a committee of experts to study how to effectively teach children from homes in which a language other than English is spoken. Their report concluded that:

> the beneficial effects of native language instruction are clearly evident in programs that are labeled "bilingual education," but they also appear in some programs that are labeled "immersion"…There is little value in conducting evaluations to determine which type of program is best. The key issue is not finding a program that works for all children and all localities, but rather finding a set of program components that works for the children in the community of interest, given that community's goals, demographics, and resources (August & Hakuta, 1998, p. 138).

The next part of this review of relevant literature includes a review of the research that attempts to demonstrate the advantages and disadvantages among different types of programs.

*Comparative Bilingual Education Research*

The majority of studies on the effects of elementary bilingual education indicate that there are more advantages than disadvantages for English Language Learners who participate in elementary bilingual education programs (Cummins, 1999; Krashen, 2000). The current challenge for researchers is to determine if there any differences between the types of elementary bilingual education programs. For example, the *Longitudinal Study of Immersion and Dual Language Instructional Programs for Language Minority Children*, referred to as the *Immersion Study*, attempted a quasi-experimental longitudinal

comparison of structured immersion, transitional bilingual education, and late-exit bilingual programs (Ramírez, Yuen, Ramey, & Pasta, 1991). After two years of schooling, students in all three programs appeared to be doing relatively and equally well at the end of the school year in first grade on standardized reading and mathematics tests. Only the late-exit students demonstrated the ability to close the gap between native English speakers' performance and English Language Learners' performance over time.

Cziko (1992) sought to summarize seven major bilingual education studies that had been conducted to date. Unfortunately, Cziko's research did little to settle the debate between different types of bilingual education programs. For example, Cziko noted that for Zappert and Cruz (1977), no difference between transitional bilingual education and structured immersion programs was interpreted as success for transitional bilingual education, whereas Baker and de Kanter (1983) interpreted it as ineffectiveness.

Rossell and Baker (1996) conducted a review of 75 methodologically acceptable studies on the effectiveness of bilingual education. Their review included only studies that had random assignment to programs or statistical control for pre-treatment differences between groups when random assignment was not possible. Rossell and Baker concluded that the evidence from these studies did not support the superiority of transitional bilingual education for English Language Learners when compared to structured immersion.

Thomas and Collier (1997) analyzed 700,000 student records to track the long-term educational outcomes of English Language Learners in five school districts. They found significant program effects that were apparent by late high school. Only those

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groups that received strong, grade-level cognitive and academic support in both their first and second languages for many years were found to be succeeding at the end of high school. Formal schooling in the first language was the largest single predictor of long-term success (Thomas & Collier, 1997). The length of time in the program was also found to be crucial. It appeared that four to seven years were required for English Language Learners to close the gap between their test scores and those of their native English-speaking peers. Current teaching approaches, such as language and academic content integration, were significant, as was sociocultural support for English Language Learners. Two-way immersion was found to be the program type with the highest long-term success, with students achieving well above grade level.

Greene (1998) re-examined the list of methodologically acceptable studies reviewed by Rossell and Baker (1996). After identifying only 11 studies that actually met the standards for being methodologically acceptable, Greene aggregated the results of those studies by a technique known as meta-analysis. The conclusion of the study was that the use of at least some native language in the instruction of English Language Learners has moderate beneficial effects compared to English Language Learners taught only in structured immersion programs where there was no native language support.

Thomas and Collier (2001) found that two-way immersion bilingual programs enabled English Language Learners to reach the 50th percentile on standardized tests on all subjects in both languages and to maintain or surpass that level of achievement. In contrast, the achievement gap between English Language Learners in segregated, remedial programs and their peers was found to widen after English Language Learners

re-entered mainstream classes. Students educated in a bilingual program were found to outperform their peers who were educated in a monolingual English program in all subjects after four to seven years. While comparative studies illustrate some of the advantages and disadvantages of bilingual education, previous methodologies and procedures of bilingual education studies have been criticized for being unacceptable or inappropriate.

*Critiques of Bilingual Education Research*

Many of the critiques of bilingual education research have been generated by advocates from one side of the issue or the other. For example, bilingual education advocates may generate a study that is summarily refuted by those supporting the abolition of bilingual education. The following studies provide a relatively independent critique of the methods and procedures used by bilingual education researchers.

Longitudinal studies by Burkheimer et al. (1989) and Ramirez et al. (1991) were reviewed by a National Research Council panel of the Committee on National Statistics (Meyer & Fienberg, 1992). The primary focus of the panel's report was determining whether the statistical methods used in the studies were appropriate. The report found that there was a reliance on complicated statistical methods to overcome poorly designed, executed, and interpreted research studies. The report also found invalid comparisons among longitudinal samples because of sample attrition.

McQuillan (1998) investigated the proportion of methodologically unacceptable studies in the bilingual education literature. While the sample rates of acceptable studies

in bilingual education are similar to other educational fields, the percentage of studies found to be acceptable depended on the total or absolute number of studies examined. Unfortunately, the bulk of bilingual education studies were program evaluations that were not designed or regulated by educational researchers. As a result, McQuillan cautioned that the results of the studies might not be directly applicable to policymakers and practitioners.

Collier (1992) contends that three of the most common problems of longitudinal studies that have examined the academic achievement of English Language Learners in a given program include: (a) difficulty of controlling for all variables that influence analysis of the results, (b) the limited generalizability of cross-sectional analyses, and (c) the limits of the standardized performance assessments used to evaluate academic achievement. Collier recommends that additional longitudinal research is necessary to improve the applicability of research on bilingual education programs.

While there may be some disagreement over the validity and reliability of some research studies, bilingual education programs have been found to produce positive outcomes for English Language Learners, ranging from extremely weak to strong, especially when compared to English Language Learners who do not participate in bilingual education programs. The keys to success are not only the amount of time that they spend in the bilingual education program but the quality of the program in which they participate. Research on the attributes of effective elementary bilingual education programs that were found to have strong positive outcomes on the academic success of English Language Learners are presented in the next section.

*Attributes of Effective Elementary Bilingual Education Programs*

Previous qualitative and quantitative research has been done in schools and districts where English Language Learners have experienced high levels of academic success (August & Hakuta, 1998; Howard et al., 2003; Rennie, 1993; Robledo Montecel, Cortez, & Cortez, 2002). The following seven attributes have been found to be parts of effective elementary bilingual education programs: (a) leadership, vision, and goals; (b) district, school, and classroom climate; (c) program articulation; (d) organization, accountability, and assessment; (e) quality people; (f) parental and community involvement; and (g) curriculum and instruction. While many of the attributes from the various studies intersect with each other, none of the studies included the same list of attributes. The attributes that were presented in this study represented a holistic combination of salient characteristics that provided a comprehensive framework through which the perceptions of the administrators, teachers, and parents were examined. Educational leaders need to address each of the attributes in order to create an effective elementary bilingual education program for their school or district.

The first attribute of effective elementary bilingual education programs relates to leadership, vision, and goals. Educational leaders who are well informed of the rationale for bilingual education and share an active commitment to bilingualism are critical to the effective schooling of English Language Learners. Effective leaders proactively involve teachers, the community, and the private sector in the design and development of the bilingual program and are open to innovation (Carter & Chatfield, 1986; E. E. Garcia, 1991; Goldenberg & Sullivan, 1994; Lucas, Henze, & Donato, 1990; Tikunoff et al.,

1991). One of the primary roles of the leader is to create a vision and set of goals with the school community that define high expectations of all students. Furthermore, these high expectations are published and disseminated so that staff, parents, and students can articulate the purpose of the school in their own words (Robledo Montecel, Cortez, Cortez et al., 2002; Villarreal & Solís, 1998). In order to lead stakeholders in the development and support of an effective elementary bilingual education program, educational leaders must be aware of the social, political, and economic forces that interact in the educational arena (G. Lopez, 2003).

Because the issue of bilingual education parallels issues of race and class, educational leaders need to raise questions about the systems, organizational frameworks, and leadership theories that privilege certain groups and/or perspectives over others (Capper, 1993; Donmoyer, Imber, & Scheurich, 1995). Educational leaders need to challenge oppression in all forms and encourage culturally and linguistically different students to find and use their individual and collective voices (Larson, 1997; Larson & Ovando, 2001; Valenzuela, 1999). Educational leaders need to transform schools from being sorting mechanisms for the larger global market to being institutions of hope and social change (Aronowitz & Giroux, 1993; G. Lopez, 2003). This emphasis on leadership for social justice heavily influences the rest of the attributes.

The second attribute of effective elementary bilingual education programs is the creation of positive, safe, and orderly district, school, and classroom environments (Berman et al., 1995; Carter & Chatfield, 1986; Lucas et al., 1990; Minicucci & Olson, 1992; Moll, 1988). In an effective elementary bilingual education program, educators,

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students, parents, and community members place value on the linguistic and cultural background of English Language Learners, hold high expectations for their academic achievement, and ensure their integral involvement in the overall school operation (Lein et al., 1997; Ogbu & Matute-Bianchi, 1986). In order to develop positive district, school, and classroom environments, Shields (2004) suggests educational leaders work within a guiding framework from which they can reflect on individual and collective actions and beliefs.

Kincheloe and Steinberg (1995) recommend that the culture created by any system of education must be just, empowering, caring, and optimistic. A just education is one that ensures equality of access, outputs, sustainability, and outcomes (Farrell, 1999). A just system provides students with equal access to a rigorous curriculum, accountability to the same academic standards, the opportunity to graduate from school in equal proportions, and the chance to leave school fully prepared to lead productive, successful, and fulfilling lives. An empowering education is one that empowers all stakeholders to participate in, and take responsibility from, their own learning (Delpit, 1990). A caring education is firmly grounded on positive interpersonal and pedagogical relationships and values caring as a cognitive commitment (Noddings, 1986). An optimistic education focuses on those who are generally the least successful, the most marginalized, and the most disadvantaged in our education system (Shields, 2004). Taken together, a guiding framework that is built on the concepts of justice, democracy, empathy, and optimism can assist educational leaders with developing and sustaining a culture that supports English Language Learners.

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The third attribute of effective elementary bilingual education programs is program articulation. Educational leaders need to develop and maintain clearly articulated roles and responsibilities, dynamic two-way communication, and focused and sustained supports between central office and school-level staff that provide strong leadership, credibility, and respect (Howard & Christian, 2002; McLeod, 1996). A common program of instruction that is properly scoped, sequenced, and articulated across grade levels and has been aligned with developmentally appropriate practices and student language proficiency levels in English and the students' native language (McLeod, 1996; Valdez-Pierce & O'Malley, 1992) is also an important aspect of this attribute.

The fourth attribute of effective elementary bilingual education programs focuses on organization, accountability, and assessment. Researchers have found that effective schools use systematic assessment of student achievement to inform ongoing efforts to improve academic success (Carter & Chatfield, 1986; Goldenberg & Gallimore, 1991; Goldenberg & Sullivan, 1994; Slavin & Madden, 2001; Slavin & Yampolsky, 1991). The elementary bilingual education program is an integral part of the district and campus academic plan and is widely respected by the administration. There is strong accountability for the success of all students (McLeod, 1996; Villarreal & Solís, 1998). While there has been much debate over the use of standardized assessments to determine the success of culturally and linguistically diverse students (Scheurich & Skrla, 2001; Valencia et al., 2001), the appropriate use of data can be a powerful tool in the assessment of the elementary bilingual education program.

The fifth attribute of effective elementary bilingual education programs is quality people. Quality people begins with screening teacher applicants to ensure full written and oral proficiency in both languages. Fully credentialed bilingual and ESL teachers are continuously acquiring new knowledge regarding best practices in curriculum, instruction, and assessment. These teachers also receive appropriate training in the students' native language (Lucas et al., 1990; Maroney, 1998; Pease-Alvarez, Garcia, & Espinosa, 1991; Tikunoff et al., 1991). All teachers in the school regularly receive information about bilingual education, the use of data, ESL strategies, and students' cultural and linguistic characteristics that serve as assets to their academic success (Berman et al., 1995; Milk, Mercado, & Sapiens, 1992; Minicucci & Olson, 1992; Olebe, 1999; Villarreal, 1999). Equity auditing of teacher quality (Skrla, Scheurich, Garcia, & Nolly, 2004) is an important tool that can be used to improve the academic success of English Language Learners.

In order to determine whether or not English Language Learners have equitable access to quality teachers, the distribution of teachers with varying levels of education, experience, and certification needs to be examined (Skrla et al., 2004). English Language Learners most often have teachers with less education, training, and experience (Ingersoll, 1999; Lankford, Loeb, & Wyckoff, 2002). If inequities such as these are found, educational leaders need to improve recruitment, placement, professional development, and evaluation processes so that all students have access to a similar level of teacher quality that is independent of their race, class, or language.

The sixth attribute of effective elementary bilingual education programs centers on parental and community involvement. In an effective elementary bilingual education program, all parents know the rationale and the critical components of the program and are strong advocates of the program (E. E. Garcia, 1991; McLeod, 1996; Robledo Montecel et al., 1993). When parents establish partnerships with schools, they extend learning into the home and reinforce academic values outside school (Dornbusch & Ritter, 1988; Henderson, 1987). In addition to parental involvement, researchers have found that when community members know the rationale and the critical components of bilingual programs, they also become strong advocates of the program (Moll, Amanti, Neff, & González, 1992). Educational leaders need to incorporate effective strategies for overcoming common obstacles to involving parents and community members in the education of English Language Learners.

One common obstacle is a lack of understanding between the educators and parents as to the role of the parent in the education of the child. Educators generally believe that parents should be active participants while parents of English Language Learners often come from cultures where the proper role of the parent is not to intervene in the affairs of the school (D. C. Garcia, 1990). Two other common obstacles are the inability for parents to attend meetings due to work or home responsibilities and the potential language barrier between parents and educators. All of these obstacles can be overcome by carefully examining what is actually known about culturally different families, their attitudes regarding education, and how they support their children's education through the family and their informal social networks (Moll et al., 1992). After

educators learn about the funds of knowledge that English Language Learners and their families already have, educational leaders can work with stakeholders to create community family centers to provide parental information, social service referrals, lending libraries, meeting places, and translation services.

The seventh attribute of effective elementary bilingual education programs focuses on curriculum and instruction. Curriculum and instruction should emphasize functional communication between teachers and students and among fellow students, organize the instruction of basic skills and academic content around thematic units, and promote frequent student interaction through the use of collaborative learning techniques (E. E. Garcia, 1991). Teachers should supplement explicit skills instruction with student-directed activities such as cooperative learning, partner reading, and collaborative inquiry (Gersten, 1996; Hernández, 1991; Muniz-Swicegood, 1994; Rosebery, Warren, & Conant, 1992; Saunders, O'Brien, Lennon, & McLean, 1996). The classroom environment promotes high expectations for all students as evidenced by active learning environments that are meaningful, technologically appropriate, and academically challenging (Collier, 1992; Goldenberg & Sullivan, 1994; Lucas et al., 1990; Pease-Alvarez et al., 1991). Instruction is innovative and uses a variety of techniques that respond to different learning styles (McLeod, 1996; Wong Fillmore, 1985).

Differential treatment studies have contributed to the view that English Language Learners are treated differently from mainstream students as a result of forces both within and outside of school that implicitly and explicitly promote and sustain the perspectives and institutions of the majority culture (Harklau, 1994; Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco,

2000). Educational leaders must seek an educationally productive balance between commonality and diversity in heterogeneous schools and classrooms. Educational leaders need to promote a philosophy of curriculum and instruction that capitalizes on the strengths of each child, viewing cultural ways of learning as resources to be used rather than deficits to be remedied (Protheroe & Turner, 2000). Educational leaders also need to adhere to the "principle of least change" (Jordan, 1985). This principle helps make change a clearly defined, focused, and manageable process by undertaking the minimum number of changes necessary to produce the desired effects at any given time.

Educational leaders need to address the attributes of effective elementary bilingual education programs that range from the individual classroom teacher to the greater school community in order to create an environment that is conducive to educating highly successful English Language Learners. While the amount of change may seem daunting at first, educational leaders must develop, implement, monitor, and adjust strategic plans that will eventually accomplish the goal of providing an equitable and excellent education for every student. The knowledge, skills, strategies, and tools that researchers have determined to have positive effects on academic success are described in the following section.

*The Effects of Educational Leadership on Academic Success*

Claims about the effects of school leadership on student learning are justified by qualitative research on exceptional schools, quantitative research examining overall leadership effects, and quantitative research examining the effects of specific leadership

practices (Leithwood et al., 2004). By examining these three types of research, the effects of educational leadership on student achievement in general can be better understood. Appropriate generalizations from this deeper understanding can then be transferred to what educational leaders need to know and be able to do in order to improve the academic achievement of English Language Learners.

Gezi (1990), Mortimore (1993), and Scheurich (1998) examined exceptional school settings believed to be contributing significantly to student learning. Their qualitative research findings indicated that leadership positively influences not only student learning but an array of other school conditions as well. In order to improve the external validity of these studies, Leithwood et al. (2004) suggests developing a relatively large number of cases of effective leadership, reporting the results of systematic cross-case analyses, and carrying out quantitative tests of the results provided by the qualitative evidence.

Quantitative research examining overall leadership effects has been researched by Hallinger and Heck (1996a; 1996b; 1998). These studies conclude that the combined direct and indirect effects of school leadership on student outcomes are small but significant. While leadership explains only three to five percent of the variation in student learning across schools, this is about 25% of the total variation explained by all school-level variables after controlling for student demographic factors (Creemers & Reezigt, 1996). Quantitative school effectiveness studies (Hill, 1998) indicate that classroom factors explain only a slightly larger proportion of the variation in student achievement. Hart and Ogawa (1987) statistically estimated the influence of educational leaders on the

mathematics and reading achievement of students in grades 6 and 12 in 70 California school districts. They concluded that educational leaders do have an influence on student performance, but acknowledged that their investigation was not designed to identify the processes by which that influence is exercised. Murphy and Hallinger (1986) interviewed educational leaders from 12 California school districts identified as instructionally effective in order to determine district-level policies and practices used by educational leaders in carrying out their instructional leadership functions. Their investigation revealed a core set of leadership functions reported by many of the educational leaders, including: (a) setting goals and establishing standards; (b) selecting, supervising, and evaluating staff; (c) establishing an instructional and curricular focus; (d) ensuring consistency in curriculum and instruction; and (e) monitoring curriculum and instruction.

Quantitative research examining the effects of specific leadership practices has been reported in a recent study by Marzano, Waters and McNulty (2005). From an initial collection of more than 5,000 studies, 70 met their criteria of: (a) quantitative student data, (b) student achievement measures on standardized norm-referenced tests or some other objective measure of achievement, (c) student achievement as the dependent variable, and (d) teacher perceptions of leadership as the independent variable. The study identifies 21 leadership responsibilities that provide the base for the creation of a balanced leadership framework that describes the knowledge, skills, strategies, and tools that educational leaders need to influence student achievement positively. The meta-analysis identified a substantial relationship between educational leadership and student achievement to the extent that improvement of a leader's abilities by one standard

deviation above the norm would translate into a mean student achievement gain of 10 percentile points (Marzano et al., 2005). More importantly, effective educational leaders not only know which changes are most likely to improve student achievement, but also understand the dispositions of their stakeholders and tailor their leadership practices accordingly. Three of the balanced leadership responsibilities (focus, culture, and resources) and research on their associated practices are described in the following paragraph.

Leithwood et al. (2004) suggest that one way to build a coherent, sustained program of contextualized learning is to use large themes to help organize and focus a comprehensive curriculum and longer term course of study. Several well-respected educators and researchers have observed improved student achievement in schools, programs, and classrooms that have clearly defined missions, educational focuses, and organizing themes (Goodlad, 1984; Hill, Foster, & Gendler, 1990; Sizer, 1992). There is also substantial evidence that it is important to form a collaborative culture (Louis & Miles, 1990; Méndez-Morse, 1992; Peterson & Solsrud, 1996). Involving faculty in defining and directing school change strengthens commitment to improvement and identification with school goals (Peterson, 1994). Research indicates that developing a collaborative culture also produces higher student achievement (Barth, 2001; S. Clark & Clark, 1994; Little, 1995) and sharpens the effectiveness of professional development (Leithwood, 1994). In addition, a study by Bamburg and Andrews (1990) concluded that educational leaders at high-achieving elementary schools worked more consistently than

those at low-achieving schools on helping teachers obtain resources to implement their instructional programs.

The positive effects of educational leadership on student achievement are well documented in the literature. The combination of the best practices of educational leadership with the attributes of effective bilingual education programs can lead to powerful changes in the instructional program of English Language Learners. In order for positive change to occur, administrators, teachers, and parents must begin to realize the ways in which the dominant culture controls the likelihood of any constructive change happening in the first place. Critical race theory was used as the methodological and theoretical framework of this study because it is an "innovative way for framing discussions about social justice and democracy and the role of education in reproducing or interrupting current practices" (Ladson-Billings, 1998, p. 9). Administrators, teachers, and parents need to be aware of their perceptions so that practices that are in opposition to the attributes of effective elementary bilingual education programs can be altered and a culture of equity and excellence for all learners can be developed.

*Critical Race Theory*

Critical race theory is "a pedagogy, curriculum, and research agenda that accounts for the role of racism in American education and works toward the elimination of racism as part of a larger goal of eliminating all forms of subordination in education" (Solórzano, 1997, p. 7). Compared to other frameworks for gaining a deeper understanding of a phenomenon, critical race theory is unique because its challenge to the

ethnic and socioeconomic structures of educational inequality is accompanied by its

approach to creating more equitable conditions in schools and society (Yosso, 2002).

Lopez (2003) argues that educational leaders "must have a thorough understanding of

political systems, intergovernmental relations, micropolitics, community participation,

interest groups, and theories of power and conflict to effectively do their job" (p. 72). The

combination of social, political, and economic assumptions related to the education of

English Language Learners made critical race theory an appropriate framework to

uncover and examine the perceptions of administrators, teachers, and parents regarding

the attributes of an effective elementary bilingual education program.

Critical race theory evolved from critical legal studies when scholars (Bell, 1995;

Crenshaw, Gotanda, Peller, & Thomas, 1995; Delgado, 1984; Matsuda, 1991) felt that the

critical legal framework restricted their ability to examine social justice (Delgado &

Stefancic, 2001). Ladson-Billings (1998) contends that the connection between law and

education is relatively simple to establish because states generate legislation and enact

laws since education is not outlined explicitly in the United States Constitution. Lynn

(2002) offers a useful and clear articulation of the basic tenets that form the perspectives,

research methods, and pedagogy of this framework, noting that critical race theory: (a)

foregrounds race and racism while simultaneously accounting for the intersection with

other forms of domination; (b) challenges the dominant culture's claims of objectivity,

meritocracy, and neutrality; (c) is a struggle toward social justice; (d) recognizes the

centrality of experience as a legitimate form of knowledge; and (e) draws upon

interdisciplinary methodological and pedagogical perspectives. The remainder of this section provides a more detailed account of each tenet.

The first tenet of critical race theory acknowledges the central and intersecting roles of racism, classism, and other forms of subordination in maintaining inequality in educational structures, processes, and discourses (Yosso, 2002). Critical race theorists begin with the premise that racism is a normal and widespread component of our social fabric (Banks, 1993; Collins, 1991; Gordon, 1990; Ladson-Billings & Tate IV, 1995; Scheurich & Young, 1997; Tatum, 1997). Critical race theory centralizes race while also focusing on the intersections of racism with other forms of prejudice that are based on class, culture, language, or immigration status (Crenshaw, 1989; Johnson, 1998; Montoya, 1994). English Language Learners represent a highly subordinated group of students because they are generally in the ethnic and socioeconomic minority when compared to the dominant culture (TEA, 2003).

The second tenet of critical race theory challenges the dominant social and cultural assumptions regarding "culture and intelligence, language and capability, objectivity and meritocracy" (Yosso, 2002, p. 99). Critical race theorists contend that the dominant culture will tolerate and advance the interests of the minority culture only when they promote the self-interest of the dominant culture (Solórzano, 1997). Critical race theorists argue that *Brown v. Board of Education* was passed simply because the material interests of the dominant culture converged with the civil rights interests of African Americans at that particular point in time (Bell, 1995). Such a convergence not only ensures that racism always remains firmly in place but that social progress advances at

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the pace that the dominant culture determines is reasonable and judicious (Bell, 1995). The inclusion of English Language Learners in the accountability standards of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001 can be seen as a similar convergence.

NCLB claims that English Language Learners who attend schools that are unable to meet the Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) guidelines will be able to choose schools that are better equipped to provide the services needed for the students to achieve academic success. Critics of NCLB argue that even though transportation may be provided, English Language Learners lack the resources to attend schools that may be able to provide better services (Crawford, 2004). Instead, the students are forced to stay at their current school that may receive less funding to support the levels of academic achievement necessary for English Language Learners to reach the state standards. As a result, the achievement gaps between English Language Learners and native English speaking students may grow even wider.

The third tenet of critical race theory directs the formal education system toward goals of social justice and the hidden education system toward goals of critical consciousness (Yosso, 2002). Critical race theorists seek to incorporate social justice as a central goal of educational structures, processes, and discourses (Cummins, 2001; Solórzano, 2001). English Language Learners are exposed daily to forms of racism and classism in schools, media, and community, yet are not often provided with the tools to analyze, critique, and challenge this societal prejudice. In order to challenge the dominant ideology as presented in society, educational leaders must seek out, participate in, and promote consciousness about struggles for social justice (Banks, 1993; Freire, 1973;

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Sleeter, 1991). Programmatic, achievement, and teacher quality equity audits (Skrla et al., 2004) are an excellent way for educational leaders to promote insight into, lead discussions of, and develop a substantive response to systemic patterns of inequity in schools and districts.

The fourth tenet of critical race theory develops "counterdiscourses through storytelling, narratives, chronicles, family histories, scenarios, biographies, and parables that draw on the lived experiences students of color bring to the classroom" (Yosso, 2002, p. 101). Delgado (1989) suggests that it is important to bring the background of students into classroom instruction because much of reality is socially constructed and the exchange of stories from teller to listener can help overcome ethnocentrism. Educational leaders can identify the funds of knowledge (Moll et al., 1992) that students and their families bring to the school and district by carefully examining what is actually known about culturally different families, their attitudes regarding education, and how they support their children's education through the family and their informal social networks.

The fifth tenet of critical race theory utilizes interdisciplinary methods of historical and contemporary analysis to explain the linkages between educational and societal inequality (Yosso, 2002). Critical race theorists assert that the United States is a nation conceived and built on property rights (Bell, 1987; Harris, 1993). Critical race theorists argue that the dominant culture has a greater chance at attaining "the American dream of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness" (Harris, 1993, p. 1731) by leveraging their property rights. The social, political, and economic implications of a school funding system based on property taxes are indicative of this tenet of critical race theory.

The school finance system in Texas has been declared unconstitutional by the courts several times over the past 20 years. The Texas Supreme Court is currently reviewing the constitutionality of the changes made by the legislature to comply with a recent unconstitutional ruling by District Court Judge John Dietz. Before reading the rulings, Judge Dietz commented that it was up to the people of Texas to set the standards, make the sacrifice, and give direction to their leaders as to the sacrifices that need to be made in order to close the education gap and secure a common future (King, 2004). Regardless of the Texas Supreme Court's decision on the state's appeal of the lower court decision, educational leaders can use the tenets of critical race theory to examine how existing resources are currently being used in a way that provides an equal life chance for all students.

## Summary

The purpose of this chapter was to provide a deeper understanding of the principles that form the methodological and theoretical framework of this study. The first section contained a brief history of bilingual education in Texas and a description of the most common elementary bilingual education program models. The second section presented a review of the literature that included research on elementary bilingual education in general, comparative research on different types of elementary bilingual education programs, critiques of elementary bilingual education research, research on attributes of effective elementary bilingual education programs, and research on the effects of educational leadership on academic achievement. The chapter concluded with a

description of the five major tenets of critical race theory. In Chapter III, the

methodology and procedures that were used in this study are presented.

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURES

Introduction

This chapter describes the methodology and procedures that were used to examine the perceptions of administrators, teachers, and parents regarding the attributes of an effective elementary bilingual education program. This chapter begins with a restatement of the purpose of the study and the research questions that guided the study. Next, the chapter describes the specific methodology that was used, the strengths and limitations of the methodology, and the design of the study. The chapter then details the sampling method and the salient characteristics of the sample population. Next, the chapter describes the data collection instruments, protocols, steps, and analysis processes that were used to address the research questions. The chapter concludes with a description of the reliability and validity of the data collection instruments and protocols.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the perceptions of administrators, teachers, and parents regarding the attributes of an effective elementary bilingual education program. An effective elementary bilingual education program has been defined as a program within a school where:

(a) more than 40% of the students were identified as English Language Learners,
(b) more than 50% of the students were identified as economically disadvantaged,
(c) no students were exempted from taking the English or Spanish TAKS due to language issues, and
(d) the school met the criteria for a rating of either Recognized or Exemplary in the Texas Academic Excellence Indicator System (TEA, 2000b).

However, it was not necessary for the administrators, teachers, and parents to be stakeholders in an elementary bilingual education program that met this definition of effectiveness. Rather, the focus of this study was the examination of the attributes that the stakeholders perceived to be important to the relative effectiveness of their program.

Elementary bilingual education was the focus of this study because researchers have found that English Language Learners do better academically over the long-term if they participate in effective elementary bilingual education programs at the start of their school careers (Strozer, 1994; Thomas & Collier, 2001). The salient attributes of effective elementary bilingual education programs have been identified by researchers in various isolated studies (August & Hakuta, 1998; Howard et al., 2003; Rennie, 1993; Robledo Montecel, Cortez, & Cortez, 2002). These attributes were holistically combined in this study to provide a comprehensive framework through which the perceptions of the administrators, teachers, and parents were examined. In addition, educational leadership has been shown to have a positive effect on student achievement (Leithwood et al., 2004; Marzano et al., 2005). Through an examination of the perceptions of administrators, teachers, and parents regarding the factors that influence the early academic achievement of English Language Learners, the results of this study can assist educational leaders in the formulation of effective policy and practice to create equity and excellence for all students.

## Research Questions

The following research questions were the focus of this study:

1. What are the perceived attributes of an effective elementary bilingual education program according to parents of elementary bilingual education students, elementary bilingual education teachers, principals of schools with elementary bilingual education programs, the district administrator of the bilingual education program, and the district superintendent?

2. How are the perceived attributes similar or different between administrators, teachers, and parents?

Methodology

Critical race theory, a form of qualitative critical inquiry, was used as the

methodological and theoretical framework for this study. Kincheloe and McLaren (1994)

contend that qualitative critical inquiry researchers and theorists accept the following

basic assumptions:

1.  All thought is fundamentally mediated by power relations that are social in nature
    and historically constituted.
2.  Facts can never be isolated from the domain of values or removed from
    ideological inscription.
3.  The relationship between concept and object, and between signifier and signified,
    is never stable and is often mediated by the social relations of capitalist
    production consumption.
4.  Language is central to the formation of subjectivity, that is, both conscious and
    unconscious awareness.
5.  Certain groups in any society are privileged over others, constituting an
    oppression that is most forceful when subordinates accept their social status as
    natural, necessary, and inevitable.
6.  Oppression has many faces, and concern for only one form of oppression at the
    expense of others can be counterproductive because of their interconnectedness.
7.  Mainstream research practices are generally implicated, albeit often unwillingly,
    in the reproduction of systems of class, race, and gender oppression (pp. 139-
    140).

Critical race theory is an appropriate methodology for examining the perceptions of

administrators, teachers, and parents regarding the attributes of an effective elementary

bilingual education program because the majority of English Language Learners in Texas

are from the Hispanic ethnic group and economically disadvantaged class that are

currently not considered dominant (TEA, 2003).

Merriam (2002) explains that because critical qualitative research is drawn from

critical social science, critical qualitative research "uncovers, examines, and critiques the

social, cultural, and psychological assumptions that structure and limit our ways of

thinking and being in this world" (p. 9). Ladson-Billings (1998) states that one of the strengths of critical race theory is that it can be used as an "innovative theoretical way for framing discussions about social justice and democracy and the role of education in reproducing or interrupting current practices" (p. 9). Crotty (2003) believes that critical inquiry is a strong approach because:

> it is a contrast between a research that seeks merely to understand and a research that challenges…between a research that reads the situation in terms of interaction and community and research that reads it in terms of conflict and oppression…between a research that accepts the status quo and a research that seeks to bring about change (p. 113).

On the other hand, Ellsworth (1989) points out that critical race theory is limited in the sense that "other oppressions are marginalized in the name of addressing racism" (p. 316). In addition, Pietrykowski (1996) claims that critical race theory is in itself oppressive because it "reproduces a culture of silence due to its technical jargon, obscure references, and ambiguous phrasing" (p. 84). The strengths and weaknesses of the methodology were leveraged and addressed in the design of the study that is presented in the next section.


Design

A collective case study approach was used as the design of this study. According to Stake (2000), a collective case study is "the study of multiple cases that are chosen because it is believed that understanding them will lead to better understanding, perhaps better theorizing, about a still larger collection of cases" (p. 437). Merriam (2002) writes that the case selection process depends upon "what the researcher wants to learn and the

significance that knowledge might have for extending theory or improving practice" (p.

179). The strength of a collective case study is that it can provide a rich description of the

cases being studied. If the description of the cases is not rich enough, then the reader of

the study is not able to generalize or transfer the findings to his or her context, thus

highlighting the potential weakness of a collective study. The next section describes the

selection criteria of the sample population that represented the cases studied in this

research.

<center>Sampling Method and Population</center>

Purposeful sampling was used as the sampling method in this study. Ritchie,

Lewis, and Elam (2003) recommend this approach because "the sampling units have

particular features or characteristics which will enable detailed exploration and

understanding of the central theme or puzzles which the researcher wishes to study" (p.

78). Purposeful sampling is a major strategy to improve external validity because it

enhances the ability of the researcher to provide a rich, thick description of the cases

being studied.

The participants were selected because they were a parent or guardian of a child

who was currently enrolled in an elementary bilingual education program, a teacher who

was currently teaching in the elementary bilingual education program, or an administrator

who was directly or ultimately responsible for the design, implementation, or evaluation

of the district or campus elementary bilingual education program. The findings were

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presented in a way to maintain the confidentiality and anonymity of the people and places in this study.

*District and Schools*

A district was selected that was large (more than 50,000 students were enrolled), urban (resided in a county with populations of 650,000 or more), and had a diverse population of students (no ethnic group represented more than 50% of the student population). This type of district was selected because it represented the type of district that the majority of English Language Learners had been enrolled in and were projected to continue enrolling in for the next several decades. Eight elementary schools within the district that had a bilingual education program were selected to participate in this study.

The researcher was an employee in the district that was selected for this study while the district was being studied. Glesne (1999) describes the advantages and disadvantages of researchers doing "backyard research" in their own organization. A researcher may choose his or own organization because it may provide relatively easy to access, the groundwork for rapport may already established, the research may be useful for his or her professional life, and the amount of time needed for various research steps may be reduced (Glesne, 1999).

One of the disadvantages of using ones own organization for research is that previous experiences with settings or peoples can set up expectations for certain types of interactions that may constrain effective data (Glesne, 1999). The researcher addressed this potential problem by distributing the consent form and reviewing it with the

participants to make sure they understood that the researcher was acting as an independent researcher and not an employee of the district. If a participant asked a question that a researcher who was not employed with the district would not be able to answer, the researcher declined to answer the question and reiterated the independent role that the researcher played in this study.

Another disadvantage of using ones own organization for research is that the researcher may have to negotiate with colleagues and superiors not only what data can be collected but also what findings are reported (Glesne, 1999). The researcher agreed to exclude one school from the potential sample because the district administrators were not comfortable with including the school in the study due to recent boundary changes that resulted in several difficult meetings with parents and teachers from the school. The district did not require access to any preliminary findings from the study as long as the researcher provided a summary report of recommendations after the study was completed.

*Parents*

Parents or guardians of students who had been enrolled in an elementary bilingual education program in the district for at least three years were asked to participate voluntarily in this study. Only parents of students who were enrolled in one of the selected schools were invited to participate. Parents who listed a non-English home language other than Spanish were not invited to participate.

*Teachers*

Teachers who had taught in an elementary bilingual education classroom in the district being studied for at least the last three years were asked to participate voluntarily in this study. Only teachers who were at the selected schools were selected to participate in this study.

*Administrators*

Principals of elementary schools that had bilingual education programs were asked to participate voluntarily in this study. The administrator of the district bilingual education program was asked to participate voluntarily in this study. The current superintendent of the district was also asked to participate voluntarily in this study. The next section describes the procedures that were used to collect and analyze data for this study.

Data Collection Instruments and Protocols

Data was collected through multiple instruments and protocols. These included surveys, focus group interviews, individual interviews, direct observations, and document reviews. Questions for the surveys, focus group interviews, and individual interviews were adapted from the questionnaires that were developed and used for the *Texas Successful School Study* (TEA, 2000b). The copyright notice on the questionnaires provided permission for the questionnaires to be duplicated. Permission was requested from the TEA before the contents of the questionnaire were adapted as part of this study.

*Teacher Surveys*

Ritchie, Lewis and Elam (2003) recommend that surveys be used in qualitative research for three reasons. First, surveys are ideal data collection instruments when time and money are limited. Second, surveys are easy to administer confidentially. Third, surveys are useful confirmation tools when corroborating other findings. Surveys were delivered to selected teachers during an initial meeting with the eligible teachers or sent to eligible teachers through the district's electronic mail system. Directions regarding how to complete and return the survey were discussed at the meeting and included on the survey. Eighteen complete surveys were returned to the researcher and included in this study.

The teacher surveys were used to collect qualitative and quantitative data. The surveys included a combination of closed- and open-ended questions. The closed-ended questions asked the participants to rate how effectively the teachers, schools, and district contribute to the academic success of English Language Learners. The open-ended questions addressed the perceived attributes of an effective elementary bilingual education program. Qualitative data was collected on the perceptions of teachers regarding the attributes of an effective elementary bilingual education program (Appendix C). Data collected from the surveys were combined with data from classroom observations, focus group interviews, individual interviews, and document reviews to compare the perceptions of the teachers to what the parents and administrators perceived as the attributes of an effective elementary bilingual education program.

*Parent Focus Group Interviews*

A focus group interview is a qualitative data gathering technique that finds the researcher directing the interaction and inquiry in a very structured or unstructured manner, depending on the interview's purpose (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). Kreuger (1998) defines a focus group as a "carefully planned discussion designed to obtain perceptions in a defined area of interest in a permissive, non-threatening environment" (p. 18). The main purpose of focus group research is to draw upon respondents' attitudes, feelings, beliefs, experiences, and reactions in a way in which would not be feasible using surveys, direct observations, and individual interviews. These attitudes, feelings, and beliefs may be partially independent of a group or its social setting, but are more likely to be revealed through the social gathering and the interaction which being in a focus group provides. Focus groups are particularly useful when there are power differences between the participants and decision-makers, when the everyday use of language and culture of particular groups is of interest, and when one wants to explore the degree of consensus on a given topic (Morgan & Kreuger, 1993).

The focus group interviews were used to collect qualitative data on the perceptions of parents regarding the attributes of an effective elementary bilingual education program (Appendix C). Focus group interview questions were asked in English and Spanish. The focus group interview questions included a combination of closed- and open-ended questions. The closed-ended questions asked the participants to rate how effectively the teachers, schools, and district contribute to the academic success of English Language Learners. The open-ended questions addressed the perceived attributes

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of an effective elementary bilingual education program. An interpreter who was familiar

with the purpose of the study was used to interpret the questions and responses since the

researcher was not proficient in Spanish. There was one focus group interview at each of

the eight schools. The focus group interviews took place on campus after school hours.

The researcher arranged a light dinner and childcare and the interviews were scheduled to

last for approximately one hour. The focus group interviews were completed prior to the

individual interviews with the administrators so that the researcher could use the data

collected to supplement the standard interview protocol.

*Individual Administrator Interviews*

Kvale (1996) recommends that interviews be used in qualitative research for three

reasons. First, interviews allow the participant to describe what is meaningful or

important to him or her using his or her own words rather than being restricted to pre-

determined categories. Second, interviews provide high credibility and face validity.

Third, interviews allow the researcher to probe for more details and ensure that

participants are interpreting questions the way they were intended. Individual interviews

were conducted with the superintendent, the administrator of the district's bilingual

education program, and eight principals of schools that had an elementary bilingual

education program.

The individual interviews were used to collect information on the perceptions of

administrators regarding the attributes of an effective elementary bilingual education

program (Appendix C). The individual interviews included a combination of closed- and

open-ended questions. The closed-ended questions asked the participants to rate how effectively the teachers, schools, and district contribute to the academic success of English Language Learners. The open-ended questions addressed the perceived attributes of an effective elementary bilingual education program. Additional questions related to teacher surveys, direct observations, parent focus group interviews, and document reviews were added to the standard interview protocol for each participant as necessary. Follow-up and probing questions were also asked during the interviews and varied among participants.

*Direct Classroom Observations*

Trochim (2001) recommends direct observation over participant observation as a method of qualitative measurement for three reasons. First, a direct observer does not typically try to become a participant in the context. Second, direct observation allows the researcher to observe certain sampled situations rather than trying to become immersed in the entire context. Third, direct observation tends not to take as long as participant observation.

Direct observations lasted approximately 30 minutes and were conducted in 18 elementary bilingual education classrooms. Only the classrooms of those teachers who agreed to participate in this study were observed. The observations were completed prior to the individual interviews with the administrators so that the researcher could use the data collected to supplement the standard interview protocol.

*Document Reviews*

According to Taschereau (1998), a document review can be an inexpensive way of identifying issues to investigate further and provide evidence of action, change, and impact to support the perceptions collected from surveys and interviews. On the other hand, depending on the amount of data and the ease by which it can be accessed and analyzed, a review of documents can be time consuming. Document reviews of achievement and demographic data were used to provide the contextual background for this research study. An example of academic achievement data includes scores on standardized achievement assessments such as the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAKS). Achievement data was retrieved from district and state Web sites and databases. The document reviews were completed prior to the individual interviews with the administrators so that the researcher could use the data collected to supplement the standard interview protocol.

Data Collection Steps

*Access to the District*

The first step in the data collection process was to gain access to the district. The researcher met with the superintendent of the district prior to beginning the research to gain permission to access the parents, teachers, administrators, and classrooms. Concurrent with gaining access to the district, the researcher confirmed with the TEA that it was acceptable to adapt the content of the questionnaires used in the *Texas Successful*

*Schools Study* (TEA, 2000b) as part of this study. The questionnaire permission process was also completed prior to the start of the study.

### *Document Reviews*

After access and copyright were granted and the dissertation proposal was approved by the dissertation and IRB committees, the researcher examined the achievement and demographic data that were available from campus, district, and state sources. The researcher used this information to learn more about the context of the district and schools in the sample population. The researcher also used the data to identify the administrators, teachers, and parents who were invited to participate in this study.

### *Parent Focus Group Interviews*

A consent form and letter written in English and Spanish was mailed to each household of those selected to participate. The letter explained the study and invited the parents or guardians to participate in a focus group interview. The focus group interview was scheduled on the campus where the children of the focus group participants were enrolled. Before beginning the interview, the researcher and the interpreter welcomed the participants, introduced themselves to the participants, and provided an overview of the study. The entire focus group interview was audio taped. After each focus group interview, the audio tapes were transcribed into English so that the researcher was able to review the transcriptions and continue to examine the data.

*Teacher Surveys*

The researcher contacted the principals of elementary schools that had bilingual education programs by telephone to inform them of the study, review the timeline of events, and schedule a meeting with the selected bilingual education teachers from each campus. The researcher met with the teachers at each school to inform them about the study, review the timeline of events, give them a copy of the consent form and survey, schedule classroom observations, and answer questions they had about the study. The researcher mailed consent forms and surveys to teacher participants who were unable to attend the meeting using the district's electronic mail system.

The teachers could complete a digital survey, which they could return to the researcher through electronic mail, or a paper-based survey, which they could return to the researcher through the district's mailing system. All teachers who completed a survey had a chance at receiving a $30 gift certificate to a local restaurant as a token of appreciation for completing the survey.

*Classroom Observations*

After the meetings with the teachers, the researcher proceeded to observe 18 classrooms, scripting observations or writing anecdotes of activities in the classroom that related to the cognitive, affective, and linguistic needs of English Language Learners. The researcher regularly reviewed the observations and anecdotes to identify attributes of an effective elementary bilingual education program.

*Administrator Interviews*

As the document reviews, teacher surveys, focus group interviews, and classroom observations data were examined, the researcher appended the administrator interviews with additional queries related to each administrative participant before scheduling the interviews with the administrators. The researcher conducted the interviews with each participant at a location that was both convenient for the administrator and allowed for at least one hour of uninterrupted time. The interview was audio taped and the researcher took notes on a paper copy of the interview questions. The audio tape was transcribed after each interview so that the researcher could review the transcription and continue to examine the data for attributes of an effective elementary bilingual education program.

After all of the transcriptions were examined, the researcher gave a copy of the transcription to the administrator to determine if there were any corrections that needed to be made. After each participant checked their own transcript, the researcher continued the analysis of the data until no new information surfaced. The researcher then completed a final analysis of the data collected.

Data Analysis

Three types of coding were used to perform the analysis of the qualitative data. Open coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1990) was used to name and categorize the qualitative data collected from the teacher surveys, direct observations, focus group interviews, and individual interviews. The components of the research-based attributes of effective elementary bilingual education programs were used as the initial code words. Additional

code words were assigned to ideas that emerged from the analysis of the data. The code words were then categorized around concepts so that the number of code words was reduced. The following research-based attributes of effective elementary bilingual education programs were used as the initial concepts: (a) leadership, vision, and goals; (b) district, school, and classroom climate; (c) program articulation; (d) organization, accountability, and assessment; (e) quality people; (f) parental and community involvement; and (g) curriculum and instruction.

Axial coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1990) was used to make connections between the categorized code words and to further group the code words into broader concepts. Differences in perception between administrators, teachers, and parents within a core category were examples of sub-categories that were formed during the axial coding stage. Selective coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1990) was used to integrate categories or sub-categories that developed into a theoretical framework that served as a common thread among the categories and sub-categories.

The researcher used descriptive statistics and graphical analysis to examine the quantitative aspects of the surveys, interviews, observations, and document reviews. Frequencies of distribution (Trochim, 2001) were used to describe multiple variables such as standardized test scores, ethnicity, and socioeconomic class. The central tendency (Trochim, 2001) was used to describe the mean, median, and mode of sets of values. Ranges (Trochim, 2001) were used to describe the variability of values. The researcher also used a variety of charts and figures to represent the analysis graphically. Analysis of the qualitative and quantitative data was an ongoing process throughout the study.

Trochim (2001) suggests that data preparation involves: (a) developing a database structure, (b) logging the data, (c) checking the data for accuracy, (d) entering the data into the computer, and (e) transforming the data. The researcher prepared and maintained a database on a computer to keep track of data. The researcher kept paper copies of data in a secure filing cabinet in the researcher's office. The researcher kept digital copies of data on a computer that was secured with a password. The researcher checked data for completeness and accuracy within a reasonable amount of time after the data was received by the researcher. The researcher entered the data into the database and checked records on a random basis to improve the accuracy of the data entry.

Various types of technology were used to collect, warehouse, analyze, and report the data and findings of this study. Microsoft Word, Access, Excel, and PowerPoint were used to document, warehouse, analyze, and report data. Microsoft Internet Explorer was used to access and retrieve data from the Internet. Microsoft Outlook was used to send and receive messages and data pertinent to the research study. An audio tape player was used to record interviews. The final sections of this chapter describe the strategies that were used to improve the reliability and validity of this study.

Reliability

Two strategies were used to improve the consistency, dependability, and reliability of this study. An audit trail in a qualitative study "describes in detail the reflections, questions, and decisions on the problems, issues, and ideas encountered in collecting data" (Merriam, 2002, p. 27). While it may not be possible for another

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researcher to replicate the findings of this study exactly, Dey (1993) contends that the audit trail is "the best we can do to explain how we arrived at our results" (p. 251). In addition to the audit trail, the researcher relied on the wisdom and expertise of the members of the dissertation committee to guide the data collection and analysis.

Validity

Four strategies were used to increase the internal and external validity of this study. Survey, observation, document review, and interview data were combined so that there was a greater potential for credibility in comparing and confirming findings. This triangulation of data is an example of convergent validity that is a test for construct validity (Trochim, 2001). The second strategy for improving validity in this study was member checks (Merriam, 2002). After the individual interviews were transcribed, the tentative findings were brought back to the administrator participants to determine whether they were plausible. The third strategy for improving validity in this study was saturation of the data and findings (Merriam, 2002). This study took place over the course of one school semester. The researcher continued the examination of the data until no new information surfaced. The fourth strategy for improving validity in this study was the use of rich, thick description (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The fourth and fifth chapters of this study include quantitative and qualitative findings that present a descriptive context of the people and places that were part of this study.

Summary

       The purpose of this chapter was to describe the methodology and procedures that were used to analyze the perceptions of administrators, teachers, and parents regarding the attributes of an effective elementary bilingual education program. This chapter began with the restatement of the purpose and the research questions. Next, the chapter described the specific methodology used, the strengths and limitations of the methodology, and the design of the study. The chapter then detailed the sampling method and the salient characteristics of the sample population. Next, the chapter described the data collection instruments and protocols, data collection steps, and data analysis processes that were used to address the research questions. The chapter concluded with a description of the validity and reliability of the data collection instruments and protocols. In Chapter IV, the major thematic findings are presented in the form of a collective case study report.

# CHAPTER IV: PROFILES OF DISTRICT, SCHOOLS, CLASSROOMS, AND PARTICIPANTS

## Introduction

This chapter presents the context of the study and profiles the district, schools, administrators, teachers, classrooms, and parents included in the study. This chapter begins with a restatement of the purpose of the study and the research questions that guided the study. Next, the chapter describes the district and campus demographics and the district's elementary bilingual education program. The chapter then presents a profile of the elementary bilingual education classrooms. Next, the chapter describes the salient characteristics and the individual interview, survey, and focus group interview settings for the administrator, teacher, and parent participants. The chapter concludes with a summary.

## Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the perceptions of administrators, teachers, and parents regarding the attributes of an effective elementary bilingual education program. An effective elementary bilingual education program has been defined as a program within a school where:

(a) more than 40% of the students were identified as English Language Learners,
(b) more than 50% of the students were identified as economically disadvantaged,
(c) no students were exempted from taking the English or Spanish Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills due to language issues, and
(d) the school met the criteria for a rating of either Recognized or Exemplary in the Texas Academic Excellence Indicator System (TEA, 2000b).

However, it was not necessary for the administrators, teachers, and parents to be stakeholders in an elementary bilingual education program that met this definition of effectiveness. Rather, the focus of this study was the examination of the attributes that the stakeholders perceived to be important to the relative effectiveness of their program.

Elementary bilingual education was the focus of this study because researchers have found that English Language Learners do better academically over the long-term if they participate in effective elementary bilingual education programs at the start of their school careers (Strozer, 1994; Thomas & Collier, 2001). The salient attributes of effective elementary bilingual education programs have been identified by researchers in various isolated studies (August & Hakuta, 1998; Howard et al., 2003; Rennie, 1993; Robledo Montecel, Cortez, & Cortez, 2002). These attributes were holistically combined in this study to provide a comprehensive framework through which the perceptions of the administrators, teachers, and parents were examined. In addition, educational leadership has been shown to have a positive effect on student achievement (Leithwood et al., 2004; Marzano et al., 2005). By examining the perceptions of administrators, teachers, and parents regarding the factors that influence the early academic achievement of English Language Learners, the results of this study can assist educational leaders in the formulation of effective policy and practice to create equity and excellence for all students.

Research Questions

The following research questions were the focus of this study:

1.  What are the perceived attributes of an effective elementary bilingual education program according to parents of elementary bilingual education students, elementary bilingual education teachers, principals of schools with elementary bilingual education programs, the district administrator of the bilingual education program, and the district superintendent?

2.  How are the perceived attributes similar or different between administrators, teachers, and parents?

District Demographics

The district participating in this study was selected because it was large (more than 50,000 students were enrolled), urban (resided in a county with populations of 650,000 or more), and had a diverse population of students (no ethnic group represented more than 50% of the student population). Districts of this type were enrolling (TEA, 2000a) and are projected to continue enrolling the greatest numbers of English Language Learners (Murdock et al., 2002). The district had grown 7% during the past four years and had maintained a Recognized accountability rating from the TEA. The percentages of African American students, English Language Learners, and students who were economically disadvantaged had increased slightly over that same period of time. The percentage of White students had decreased 13% while the percentage of Hispanic students had increased by 11%. The percentage of students with special education needs

had decreased slightly while the percentage of students in the gifted and talented program

had increased dramatically. Table 1 presents the demographics of the district sampled in

this study and provides a district context for the study. The data for the table were

acquired from the Data Processing Department of the district.

**Table 1**

*Demographics of Sampled District*

| Demographic Variables | Year | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 |
| Enrollment | 53030 | 54785 | 56008 | 57265 |
| White | 57% | 53% | 53% | 44% |
| Hispanic | 32% | 35% | 35% | 43% |
| African American | 8% | 8% | 9% | 9% |
| Special Education | 16% | 16% | 16% | 14% |
| Gifted and Talented | 2% | 2% | 2% | 7% |
| English Language Learner | 4% | 4% | 5% | 5% |
| Economically Disadvantaged | 35% | 36% | 37% | 37% |
| AEIS Rating | Recognized | Recognized | Recognized | Recognized |

*Note*. Enrollment indicates the total number of students who were reported in membership on October 31 of each year. AEIS Rating indicates the Academic Excellence Indicator System rating the district was assigned by the Texas Education Agency.

District Elementary Bilingual Education Program

According to the district's elementary bilingual education Web site, the

philosophy of the elementary bilingual education program is that:

> all students who have a home language other than English and who have been
> identified as an English Language Learner shall be provided a full opportunity to
> participate in a Bilingual or English as a Second Language program to ensure
> equal educational opportunity (Mendoza, 2005).

It is further stated that:

> the purpose of the bilingual education program shall be to enable English
> Language Learners to become competent in the comprehension, speaking,
> reading, and composition of the English language through the development of
> literacy and academic skills in the primary language and English. Such a program
> shall emphasize the mastery of English language skills as well as mathematics,
> science and social studies, as integral parts of the academic goals for all students
> to enable English Language Learners to participate equitably in school (Mendoza,
> 2005).

Three core values that serve as the essential and enduring tenets of the elementary

bilingual education program are also listed in the Web site. The three core values are:

1. The knowledge that children gain through their first language makes the English
   they hear and read more comprehensible.
2. The ability to read in the first language transfers to the second language.
3. Exposure to a wide range of books in the primary language validates the primary
   language and culture, and contributes to continued first language development
   (Mendoza, 2005).

The core values are supported by five research-based guiding principles. The first

guiding principle is cognitive development. Cognitive development allows English

Language Learners to use their native language to facilitate cognitive and academic

growth (Hakuta, 1986). The second guiding principle is literacy development. The use of

the first language as the medium of instruction is one of the most salient features of a

bilingual education program. The first language enhances the development of basic

literacy by supplying background knowledge, which can make English input more comprehensible (Krashen, 2000). The third guiding principle is transfer of literacy skills. Research evidence is clear that basic literacy skills developed in the first language transfer to the second language (Cummins, 1994). The fourth guiding principle is self-concept. The learner's self-concept and perception of the environment influences the individual's ability to become part of the new culture and in turn promotes academic achievement (Wang, 1976). The fifth guiding principle is language development. Researchers have found that for young children and adolescents in kindergarten through twelfth grade, uninterrupted cognitive, academic, and linguistic development are essential to school success, and neglect or overemphasis of one of these three areas may affect students' long-term growth (Collier, 1992). After defining the core values and guiding principles, the district's Web site highlights some of the critical attributes of the elementary bilingual education program.

According to the district's Web site, English Language Learners will connect knowledge, skills and strategies across varied tasks of reading and literacy learning in order to comprehend oral, written, and visual language (Mendoza, 2005). A comprehensive reading program which provides critical thinking, increased attention to other subjects, independent thinking, and an enthusiasm for reading and learning includes several specific elements (Mendoza, 2005).

The first element is that students are given opportunities to:

1. Use word recognition strategies.
2. Establish purposes for reading fiction, expository and functional texts.
3. Determine main idea, paraphrase, and summarize.
4. Draw inferences (predict, conclude, and generalize).
5. Find similarities and differences across texts.
6. Listen and speak, read and write, view and represent information critically (Mendoza, 2005).

The second element is that each elementary bilingual education teacher instructs students

to comprehend more effectively through strategies in:

1. Recognizing words and acquiring a vocabulary.
2. Fluently reading complex texts.
3. Comprehending readings selected for a variety of purposes.
4. Monitoring and making modifications when comprehension breaks down.
5. Learning critically from text (previewing, questioning, rereading).
6. Researching and inquiring in all forms of print, including technology.
7. Acquiring information and problem solving.
8. Communicating their learning of traditional and creative products.
9. Referring to one's own experiences and linking those to text through the language arts strands (Mendoza, 2005).

The third element is that parents are encouraged to strengthen the school and home

connection by:

1. Reading aloud to their children.
2. Writing to and with their children (lists, thank you notes, letters, stories, journals).
3. Demonstrating and modeling reading and writing.
4. Setting aside a time for family reading and writing.
5. Encouraging children to read for enjoyment.
6. Saturating their children's environment with print.
7. Helping children acquire a wide range of experience and background knowledge.
8. Talking with their children about their experiences, asking questions, engaging in dialogue about what they have learned.
9. Communicating with their children's teacher and sharing their children's literacy experience.
10. Praising, encouraging, and enjoying their children's efforts (Mendoza, 2005).

The district's elementary bilingual education Web site also includes an English/Spanish language developmental model and chart (Appendix A) that illustrates the progression toward bilingualism and describes a grade level specific course of study. The next section presents the elementary bilingual education school demographics as well as a profile of the elementary bilingual education classroom.

Campus Demographics

The district began the elementary bilingual education cluster program during the 1995-1996 school year with five schools. Due to the growing enrollment of English Language Learners and the district's desire to keep English Language Learners as close to their home as possible, the program was expanded to nine schools for the 2005-2006 school year. Eight of the nine schools participated in this study. The district planned to expand the program by two schools for the 2006-2007 school year.

The elementary bilingual education cluster schools were similar in enrollment to the district elementary school average enrollment during the 2005-2006 school year. Half of the schools were above the average enrollment and half of the schools were below the average enrollment. The elementary bilingual education cluster schools served fewer White and African American students and more Hispanic students than the district elementary school average. Only one elementary bilingual education cluster school had a higher percentage of White students and a lower percentage of Hispanic students than the district elementary school average. Three of the elementary bilingual education cluster schools had a percentage of African American students that was higher than the district

elementary school average. Table 2 presents student ethnicity data that provide a context

for the schools in the study. The data for the table were acquired from the Data

Processing Department of the district.

**Table 2**

*Student Ethnicity Demographics*

| Location | Total Students | Ethnicity | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | White | Hispanic | African American |
| District Average | 671 | 40% | 47% | 10% |
| Campus One | 579 | 56% | 39% | 2% |
| Campus Two | 708 | 9% | 78% | 12% |
| Campus Three | 840 | 15% | 68% | 13% |
| Campus Four | 730 | 5% | 92% | 2% |
| Campus Five | 614 | 19% | 68% | 9% |
| Campus Six | 547 | 17% | 72% | 8% |
| Campus Seven | 546 | 9% | 71% | 16% |
| Campus Eight | 698 | 7% | 88% | 4% |

*Note*. District Average indicates the average demographic for all of the
elementary schools in the district. Total Students indicates the total
number of students who were reported in membership on October 31,
2005.

All of the elementary bilingual education cluster schools had a higher percentage

of English Language Learners than the district elementary school average. Almost all of

the elementary bilingual education cluster schools enrolled almost twice as many

economically disadvantaged students than the district elementary school average. Half of

the elementary bilingual education cluster schools had a lower percentage of students

identified as needing special education services than the district elementary school

average. Half of the elementary bilingual education cluster schools had gifted and

talented enrollments that were five times less than the district elementary school average.

Table 3 presents other student demographics that provide additional context for the

schools in the study. The data for the table were also acquired from the Data Processing

Department of the district.

**Table 3**

*Other Student Demographics*

| | | Demographic Variables | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Location | Total Students | English Language Learner | Economically Disadvantaged | Special Education | Gifted and Talented |
| District Average | 671 | 7% | 44% | 15% | 5% |
| Campus One | 579 | 11% | 23% | 19% | 12% |
| Campus Two | 708 | 30% | 80% | 10% | 2% |
| Campus Three | 840 | 18% | 78% | 15% | 1% |
| Campus Four | 730 | 39% | 85% | 11% | 1% |
| Campus Five | 614 | 25% | 82% | 18% | 2% |
| Campus Six | 547 | 45% | 76% | 9% | 9% |
| Campus Seven | 546 | 31% | 89% | 18% | 1% |
| Campus Eight | 698 | 28% | 89% | 13% | 1% |

*Note*. District Average indicates the average demographic for all of the elementary schools in the district. Total Students indicates the total number of students who were reported in membership on October 31, 2005

With the exception of the White demographic group, the majority of the

elementary bilingual education cluster schools had lower 2005 third grade Reading Texas

Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) passing rates than the district elementary

school average. Five of the elementary bilingual education cluster schools had White

passing rates that were higher than the district elementary school average. Only one

elementary bilingual education cluster school had a Hispanic or Economically

Disadvantaged passing rate higher than the district elementary school average. Half of the

elementary bilingual education cluster schools had English Language Learner passing

rates that were higher than the district elementary school average. Table 4 presents the

third grade passing rates for the 2005 Reading TAKS and provides a student achievement

context for the schools in this study. The data for the table were acquired from the Data

Processing Department of the district.

**Table 4**

*Third Grade 2005 Reading TAKS Passing Rates*

| Location | Demographic Variables | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | White | Hispanic | Economically Disadvantaged | English Language Learner |
| District Average | 99% | 95% | 94% | 91% |
| Campus One | 98% | 97% | 100% | 90% |
| Campus Two | 83% | 92% | 93% | 92% |
| Campus Three | 100% | 88% | 86% | 77% |
| Campus Four | 100% | 92% | 93% | 98% |
| Campus Five | 100% | 93% | 92% | 93% |
| Campus Six | 93% | 91% | 92% | 92% |
| Campus Seven | 100% | 89% | 91% | 87% |
| Campus Eight | 100% | 87% | 85% | 82% |

*Note*. District Average indicates the average passing rates for all of the elementary
schools in the district.

Results from the 2005 fourth grade Reading TAKS indicate that half of the

elementary bilingual education cluster schools had White, Economically Disadvantaged,

or English Language Learner passing rates that were higher than the district elementary

school average. Only one elementary bilingual education cluster school had a Hispanic

passing rate that was higher than the district elementary school average. Table 5 presents

the fourth grade passing rates for the 2005 Reading TAKS and provides a student

achievement context for the schools in this study. The data for the table were acquired

from the Data Processing Department of the district.

**Table 5**

*Fourth Grade 2005 Reading TAKS Passing Rates*

| Location | Demographic Variables | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| | White | Hispanic | Economically Disadvantaged | English Language Learner |
| District Average | 95% | 84% | 79% | 80% |
| Campus One | 97% | 82% | 78% | 64% |
| Campus Two | 90% | 78% | 72% | 89% |
| Campus Three | 100% | 80% | 83% | 80% |
| Campus Four | 100% | 75% | 74% | 70% |
| Campus Five | 92% | 81% | 81% | 90% |
| Campus Six | 100% | 85% | 81% | 85% |
| Campus Seven | 67% | 77% | 78% | 84% |
| Campus Eight | 83% | 71% | 84% | 68% |

*Note*. District Average indicates the average passing rates for all of the
elementary schools in the district.

Results from the 2005 fourth grade Reading TAKS indicate that half of the

elementary bilingual education cluster schools had White passing rates equal to or higher

than the district elementary school average. Only one elementary bilingual education

cluster school had Hispanic or Economically Disadvantaged passing rates that were

higher than the district elementary school average. Only two of the elementary bilingual

education cluster schools had English Language Learner passing rates that were lower

than the district elementary school average. Table 6 presents the fifth grade passing rates for the 2005 Reading TAKS and provides a student achievement context for the schools in this study. The data for the table were acquired from the Data Processing Department of the district.

**Table 6**

*Fifth Grade 2005 Reading TAKS Passing Rates*

| Organization | Demographic Variables | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| | White | Hispanic | Economically Disadvantaged | English Language Learner |
| District Average | 98% | 90% | 87% | 71% |
| Campus One | 98% | 97% | 100% | 90% |
| Campus Two | 100% | 82% | 72% | 89% |
| Campus Three | 89% | 77% | 78% | 77% |
| Campus Four | 100% | 83% | 80% | 72% |
| Campus Five | 91% | 85% | 83% | 73% |
| Campus Six | 90% | 90% | 85% | 90% |
| Campus Seven | 100% | 75% | 76% | 61% |
| Campus Eight | 89% | 86% | 86% | 64% |

*Note*. District Average indicates the average passing rates for all of the elementary schools in the district.

Based on the results of the 2005 TAKS, only two of the elementary bilingual education cluster schools were assigned a Recognized accountability rating by the Texas Education Agency (TEA). Only one of the elementary bilingual education cluster schools had fewer teachers than the district elementary school average. Only one of the elementary bilingual education cluster schools had a lower percentage of White teachers than the district elementary school average. Three of the elementary bilingual education

cluster schools had a lower percentage of Hispanic teachers than the district elementary

school average. The percentage of Hispanic teachers at half of the elementary bilingual

education cluster schools was more than double the district elementary school average.

All of the elementary bilingual education cluster schools had an average years of teaching

experience less than the district elementary school average. Table 7 presents campus and

teacher demographics that were acquired from the Data Processing and Human

Resources Departments of the district. The demographics are presented to provide a

context for the schools in this the study.

**Table 7**

*Campus and Teacher Demographics*

| Location | Campus Demographic Variables | | Teacher Demographic Variables | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | AEIS Rating | Total Number of Teachers | White | Hispanic | Average Years of Teaching Experience |
| District Average | Recognized | 44 | 78% | 19% | 12 |
| Campus One | Recognized | 44 | 91% | 4% | 11 |
| Campus Two | Acceptable | 58 | 46% | 54% | 11 |
| Campus Three | Acceptable | 58 | 77% | 11% | 8 |
| Campus Four | Acceptable | 53 | 40% | 60% | 8 |
| Campus Five | Recognized | 53 | 71% | 23% | 11 |
| Campus Six | Acceptable | 42 | 37% | 63% | 10 |
| Campus Seven | Acceptable | 48 | 49% | 50% | 8 |
| Campus Eight | Acceptable | 56 | 75% | 17% | 9 |

*Note*. District Average indicates the average for all of the elementary schools in the district.
AEIS Rating indicates the 2005-2006 Academic Excellence Indicator System rating the
school was assigned by the TEA.

Elementary Bilingual Classroom Profile

All teachers who had taught in an elementary bilingual education classroom for at least the last three years in the district being studied were invited to participate in a classroom observation as part of this study. The researcher scheduled a 30-minute observation with each teacher either in person, over the telephone, or through electronic mail. Classrooms were observed at six of the eight schools. One school did not have any teachers who met the requirements for the study. The only teacher who met the requirements at another school chose not to participate in the study.

Kindergarten was the most observed grade level, followed by first, third, fourth, and fifth. No second grade classrooms were observed. The average observed class size was 15 students with 9 being the smallest enrollment and 23 being the largest. The average number of adults in the room was two with half of the classrooms having only the teacher. The other half of the classrooms had up to three adults in the classroom at a time. In addition to the elementary bilingual education teacher, the adults included a parent or high school student volunteer, a student teacher, an assistant, a specialist, or another teacher. The highest ratio of students to adults was 19:1 and the lowest ratio was 5:1. The average student to adult ratio was 10:1. The highest ratio of students to teacher was 23:1 and the lowest ratio was 9:1. The average student to teacher ratio was 15:1. Table 8 presents the grade levels and number of students, teachers, and other adults in the classrooms that were observed as part of this study.

**Table 8**

*Grade Levels and People Observed in Elementary Bilingual Classrooms*

| Campus | Grade Level | Number of Students | Number of Teachers | Number of Other Adults |
|--------|-------------|--------------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| One | 5 | 9 | 1 | 0 |
| Two | 1 | 18 | 1 | 2 |
| Two | 1 | 17 | 1 | 0 |
| Two | Kinder | 15 | 1 | 2 |
| Two | Kinder | 19 | 1 | 1 |
| Four | 4 | 15 | 1 | 1 |
| Four | 3 | 13 | 1 | 0 |
| Four | Kinder | 13 | 1 | 0 |
| Six | Kinder | 14 | 1 | 0 |
| Six | Kinder | 15 | 1 | 1 |
| Six | 4 | 23 | 1 | 2 |
| Six | 3 | 19 | 1 | 0 |
| Seven | 5 | 9 | 1 | 0 |
| Seven | 1 | 13 | 1 | 0 |
| Seven | 3 | 10 | 1 | 0 |
| Seven | 4 | 19 | 1 | 1 |
| Seven | 5 | 18 | 1 | 0 |
| Eight | 1 | 18 | 1 | 1 |

The most prevalent subject being taught during the observations was math, followed by language arts, writing, reading, and science. The dominant language being used by students and adults was Spanish, followed by several classrooms (mostly third, fourth, and fifth grades) where English was the dominant language, and only a few classrooms where there was an equal combination of English and Spanish. The dominant language of printed material that was posted in the rooms (posters, directions, word walls, etc.) closely mirrored the dominant language of the classrooms, with printed material in English more prevalent in the upper level classrooms. Table 9 shows the subjects taught

and the dominant spoken and written languages in the classrooms that were observed as part of this study.

**Table 9**

*Classroom Subjects and Languages Observed in Bilingual Classrooms*

| Campus | Grade | Subject | Dominant Student Language(s) | Dominant Teacher Language(s) | Dominant Printed Language(s) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| One | 5 | Math/Science | English | Eng/Span | Eng/Span |
| Two | 1 | Writing | Eng/Span | Eng/Span | English |
| Two | 1 | Writing | Spanish | Eng/Span | Spanish |
| Two | Kinder | Math | Spanish | Spanish | Spanish |
| Two | Kinder | Reading | Spanish | Spanish | Spanish |
| Four | 4 | Writing | English | English | Eng/Span |
| Four | 3 | Math | Spanish | Spanish | Eng/Span |
| Four | Kinder | Language Arts | Spanish | Spanish | Spanish |
| Six | Kinder | Language Arts | Spanish | Spanish | Spanish |
| Six | Kinder | Language Arts | Spanish | Spanish | Eng/Span |
| Six | 4 | Math | Spanish | Spanish | Spanish |
| Six | 3 | Reading | Spanish | Spanish | Spanish |
| Seven | 5 | Science | Spanish | Eng/Span | Spanish |
| Seven | 1 | Math | Spanish | Spanish | Spanish |
| Seven | 3 | Math | Spanish | Spanish | Spanish |
| Seven | 4 | Language Arts | English | English | English |
| Seven | 5 | Math | English | English | English |
| Eight | 1 | Language Arts | Spanish | Spanish | Spanish |

All of the observed classrooms had designated learning centers. The most prevalent centers were computers, reading, math, and writing. The computer centers ranged from one to six desktop computers, with half of the computers turned on and half

of the computers turned off during the observation. The reading centers contained a library of books that were mostly in English. The math centers consisted of manipulatives, math games, and puzzles. The writing centers consisted of paper, pencils, and other supplies necessary for students to compose a variety of written documents. Other centers included listening stations with headphones and cassette tape players, science centers with scales, balances, and other scientific instruments, and art centers with a variety of supplies for students to create works of art. Table 10 shows the types of learning centers observed in the classrooms.

**Table 10**

*Learning Centers Observed in Bilingual Classrooms*

| Classroom | Type of Center | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Computer | Writing | Reading | Math/Science | Other |
| One | x | x | x | x | |
| Two | x | x | x | x | |
| Two | x | | x | x | |
| Two | x | x | x | x | |
| Two | x | x | x | | x |
| Four | x | | | x | |
| Four | x | x | x | x | x |
| Four | x | x | x | x | x |
| Six | x | | x | x | x |
| Six | x | | x | x | x |
| Six | x | x | | x | |
| Six | x | | | | |
| Seven | x | x | x | | x |
| Seven | x | x | x | | |
| Seven | x | | x | | x |
| Seven | x | x | x | x | |
| Seven | x | | x | x | |
| Eight | x | x | x | | |

In addition to the desktop computers that were part of the centers, almost all classrooms had a desktop computer that was connected to a television or data projector that was either mounted from the ceiling or on top of a cart. Other instructional technology that was in use in the classrooms included calculators, overhead projectors, laptop computers, portable keyboards, and CD players. Most of the classrooms had a large table in the room that was the designated guided reading table. If the table was not being used by the teacher and a small group of students, the table was either ready to be used by the teacher for that purpose at another time or used for a place to store materials that were being used during the instructional day or week. Most of the classrooms had flexible seating arrangements with desks clustered in groups ranging from two to six or tables with five to six chairs.

Many of the classrooms had similar textbooks and ancillary materials. The materials were either those that were currently adopted and supported by the district or materials that the teachers had grown accustomed to using and felt that they were still appropriate for English Language Learners. Most of the teachers were actively calling on students when they were in large group settings and actively monitoring students when they were in small or individual settings. Almost all of the classrooms had a variety of student work posted on the walls, ceiling, windows, and doors.

Administrator Demographics and Interview Settings

        Administrators who were directly or ultimately responsible for the design, implementation, and evaluation of the district or campus elementary bilingual education program were invited to participate in this study. Eight principals, one director of bilingual education, and one superintendent agreed to participate in the study. More than half of the administrator participants had more than twenty years of experience. Only two administrators spoke more than one language fluently. Only one administrator was male. Only two of the administrators were Hispanic. Table 11 presents the salient characteristics of the administrators who participated in this study. The data for the table were collected from the Human Resources Department of the district and administrator interviews.

**Table 11**

*Salient Characteristics of Administrator Participants*

| Administrator | Demographic Variables | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Location | Years of Experience | Language | Gender | Ethnicity |
| District Profile | Campus | 26 | English | Female | White |
| One | Campus | 34 | English | Female | White |
| Two | Campus | 18 | English | Female | White |
| Three | Campus | 26 | English | Female | Hispanic |
| Four | Campus | 24 | English | Female | White |
| Five | Campus | 20 | English | Female | White |
| Six | Campus | 28 | English | Female | White |
| Seven | Campus | 16 | English | Female | White |
| Eight | Campus | 26 | English | Female | White |
| Nine | District | 14 | English/Spanish | Female | Hispanic |
| Ten | District | 33 | English/Spanish | Male | White |

*Note*. District Profile indicates the most prevalent descriptors for an elementary school principal in the district that was studied. Years of Experience includes teaching and administrative experience.

The researcher scheduled a 60-minute interview with each administrator who participated in the study. Eight of the ten interviews were conducted in the administrator's office. Two interviews were conducted in the office of the researcher. The researcher gave each administrator a copy of the consent form (Appendix B) and interview questions (Appendix C) to review while the researcher assembled the audio tape recorder. After the administrator had an opportunity to review the consent form and interview questions, the researcher began the interview. The interviews ranged in duration from 45 minutes to 90 minutes. Most interviews lasted approximately 60 minutes.

The researcher began each administrator interview by asking the administrator to rate how effectively the teachers, school(s), and district contributed to the academic success of English Language Learners. The effectiveness scale was defined as excellent (A), good (B), average (C), fair (D) and poor (F). The teachers received an average rating (ranging in grades from F to A with a mode of B), the schools received an average rating (ranging in grades from D to A with a mode of C), and the district received an average rating (ranging in grades from D to B with a mode of C). The remaining open-ended interview questions addressed the perceived attributes of an effective elementary bilingual education program.

Each of the eight principal interviews were conducted after the parent focus group interview and classroom observations at their respective campus were completed. The interviews with the bilingual education director and the superintendent were conducted after all of the principal interviews were conducted and the teacher surveys had been returned. Transcripts of the interviews were mailed to the administrators for their review. The administrators had the option of accepting the transcription as is, editing the transcription, or requesting a second interview so that any corrections could be audio taped and transcribed. Most of the administrators returned the transcript with minimal changes.

Teacher Demographics and Survey Setting

All teachers who had taught in an elementary bilingual education classroom for at least the last three years in the district being studied were asked to complete a survey as part of this study. A total of 18 teachers completed a survey as part of this study. Two of the eight schools were not represented by teachers. One school did not have any teachers who met the requirements for the study. The only teacher who met the requirements at another school chose not to participate in the study. Second grade was the only grade level not represented. Three teachers were not assigned to a classroom because they supported the rest of the bilingual teachers on their campus as either a bilingual specialist or coordinator. The researcher included them in this study because they met the three-year teaching requirement and currently worked with English Language Learners and their teachers in the classrooms at their assigned campuses. The average years of teaching experience for the group was nine. Half of the teachers had nine or more years of experience. All of the teachers were female and only two teachers were not Hispanic. Table 12 contains the salient characteristics of the teachers who completed a survey in this study. The data for the table were collected from the Human Resources Department of the district and classroom observations.

**Table 12**

*Salient Characteristics of Surveyed Teachers*

| Teacher | Demographic Variables | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Grade Taught | Years of Experience | Gender | Ethnicity |
| One | 5 | 10 | Female | Hispanic |
| Two | 1 | 3 | Female | White |
| Three | 1 | 9 | Female | Hispanic |
| Four | * | 14 | Female | Hispanic |
| Five | K | 4 | Female | Hispanic |
| Six | 4 | 13 | Female | Hispanic |
| Seven | 3 | 6 | Female | Hispanic |
| Eight | K | 6 | Female | Hispanic |
| Nine | K | 3 | Female | Hispanic |
| Ten | K | 9 | Female | Hispanic |
| Eleven | 4 | 8 | Female | Hispanic |
| Twelve | 3 | 3 | Female | Hispanic |
| Thirteen | 5 | 5 | Female | Hispanic |
| Fourteen | * | 7 | Female | Hispanic |
| Fifteen | * | 19 | Female | Hispanic |
| Sixteen | 4 | 11 | Female | Hispanic |
| Seventeen | 5 | 16 | Female | Hispanic |
| Eighteen | 1 | 11 | Female | White |

*Note*. Grade Taught indicates the grade level that the teacher taught during the 2005-2006 school year. Years of Experience indicates the total number of years that the teacher has been teaching.

The researcher attempted to meet personally with each teacher who met the requirements of the study so that the teachers were aware of the purpose of the study and had the opportunity to ask any questions about the study. Consent forms (Appendix B) and teacher surveys (Appendix C) were presented to teachers at group or individual meetings. Several teachers who met the study requirements but who were not part of the

initial list of potential participants generated by the researcher were identified by teachers at the group or individual meetings.

After the researcher attempted to meet with each potential teacher participant in a group or individual setting, the researcher sent the consent form and survey through electronic mail to all of the eligible teachers unless they had already told the researcher that they did not want to participate. Teachers had the option of responding to the survey in writing and mailing it to the researcher through the district's mail system or completing the survey in Microsoft Word and sending a copy to the researcher through electronic mail. All of the teachers chose to send a digital copy of the survey to the researcher.

The researcher began each teacher survey by asking the teacher to rate the how effectively the teachers, school, and district contributed to the academic success of English Language Learners. The effectiveness scale was defined as excellent (A), good (B), average (C), fair (D) and poor (F). The teachers received a good rating (ranging in grades from B to A with a mode of B), the schools received an average rating (ranging in grades from C to A with a mode of B), and the district received a fair rating (ranging in grades from F to B with a mode of C). The remaining open-ended survey questions addressed the perceived attributes of an effective elementary bilingual education program.

Parent Demographics and Focus Group Interview Settings

All parents who had children enrolled in the district elementary bilingual education program for at least three years were invited to participate in the study. A total of 46 parents participated in this study. Two schools had only one parent participate. Most of the schools had more than 10% of the eligible families participate. The majority of the participants were female. Table 13 shows the demographics of the eligible and participating parent population. The data for the table were collected from the Data Processing Department of the district and focus group interviews.

**Table 13**

*Demographics of Eligible and Participating Families and Parent Participants*

| Campus | Eligible Families | Participating Families | Percentage Participating | Students Represented | Male Participants | Female Participants |
|--------|-------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| One    | 14                | 1                      | 7%                       | 2                    | 0                 | 1                   |
| Two    | 56                | 8                      | 14%                      | 9                    | 3                 | 6                   |
| Three  | 22                | 1                      | 5%                       | 2                    | 0                 | 1                   |
| Four   | 74                | 12                     | 16%                      | 16                   | 4                 | 9                   |
| Five   | 38                | 6                      | 16%                      | 8                    | 1                 | 5                   |
| Six    | 64                | 8                      | 13%                      | 11                   | 1                 | 7                   |
| Seven  | 47                | 5                      | 11%                      | 7                    | 1                 | 4                   |
| Eight  | 40                | 3                      | 8%                       | 6                    | 0                 | 3                   |

*Note*. Eligible Families indicates the number of families who had at least one child who had been enrolled in the elementary bilingual education program for at least three years in the district. Participating Families indicates the number of families who were represented at each focus group interview. Students Represented indicates the number of English Language Learners who were represented by the participating families.

The parents were identified by accessing the district's student demographic data. All of the parents who met the requirements were mailed a consent form (Appendix B) and letter (Appendix D) written in English and Spanish inviting them to a focus group interview. A self-addressed stamped postcard was included in the envelope to make it

easier for a parent to RSVP for the focus group interview. Several days before each focus group interview, the researcher's assistant (who spoke Spanish) contacted each parent by telephone if the researcher had not received a postcard or a returned envelope. This follow-up call provided a better estimate for the number of people who might be attending (for childcare and dinner planning) and increased the number of participants.

Each of the eight focus group interviews took place on the campus where the children of the parents who were invited attended school. Each of the meetings began at 6:00 PM. The researcher and the interpreter greeted the parents and children at the door to the school and directed them to the cafeteria. The researcher provided a light dinner for the parents and their children in the cafeteria. At approximately 6:30 PM, the researcher and the interpreter led the parents to another location where the audio tape recorder had been assembled. Volunteers from a local high school provided childcare for the children who stayed in the cafeteria.

The researcher gave each parent a copy of the consent form (Appendix B) and interview questions (Appendix C) in English and Spanish to review. After the researcher and interpreter introduced themselves, the researcher explained the study and the consent form. The interviews ranged in duration from 45 minutes to 115 minutes. Most interviews lasted approximately 60 minutes. The interpreter simultaneously interpreted the questions and responses so that the flow of the interview would not be interrupted. Most of the participants spoke only Spanish during the interview. At least one parent who responded to questions (or part of a question) in English participated at Campuses Two, Five, and Seven.

The researcher began each focus group interview by asking the parents to rate how effectively the teachers, school, and district contributed to the academic success of English Language Learners. The effectiveness scale was defined as excellent (A), good (B), average (C), fair (D) and poor (F). The teachers received a good rating (ranging in grades from D to A with a mode of A), the schools received a good rating (ranging in grades from C to A with a mode of A), and the district received an average rating (ranging in grades from D to A with a mode of B). The remaining open-ended interview questions addressed the perceived attributes of effective elementary bilingual education programs. After each interview was completed, the English portions of the interview were transcribed.

## Summary

This chapter presented the context in which this study took place. Descriptions of the district, schools, administrators, teachers, and parents who participated in the study and some findings from the classroom observations, individual interviews, surveys, and focus group interviews were presented. Chapter V presents the majority of the findings related to the research questions that guided this study.

CHAPTER V: PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine the perceptions of administrators, teachers, and parents regarding the attributes of an effective elementary bilingual education program. The study was guided by the following major research questions:

1. What are the perceived attributes of an effective elementary bilingual education program according to parents of elementary bilingual education students, elementary bilingual education teachers, principals of schools with elementary bilingual education programs, the district administrator of the bilingual education program, and the district superintendent?

2. How are the perceived attributes similar or different between administrators, teachers, and parents?

This chapter presents the findings based on the data that were collected by individual interviews, surveys, and focus group interviews with administrators, teachers, and parents. All participants' responses are presented in a manner to maintain the confidentiality of the participants in the study.

The findings are presented in two sections, in the order of the research questions. The first section includes the perceptions of the administrators, teachers, and parents. Each group of perceptions is divided into eight parts. Seven of these correspond to the attributes of effective elementary bilingual education programs that have been identified by researchers in various isolated studies (August & Hakuta, 1998; Howard et al., 2003;

Rennie, 1993; Robledo Montecel, Cortez, & Cortez, 2002). The seven attributes included: (a) leadership, vision, and goals; (b) district, school, and classroom climate; (c) program articulation; (d) organization, accountability, and assessment; (e) quality people; (f) parental and community involvement; and (g) curriculum and instruction. The eighth part corresponds to additional themes that emerged from the individual interviews, surveys, and focus group interviews. The emergent themes included: (a) funding, (b) materials, (c) staffing, (d) class size, (e) socioeconomic status, (f) translation of materials, (g) homework, and (h) educational systems. The eight parts are presented in the order they were mentioned by the participant group.

The second section describes the differences and similarities in perceptions between each group of participants regarding the attributes and emergent themes. In this section, the perceived attributes and emergent themes are presented in the order they were mentioned by the entire group. The chapter concludes with a summary.

What are the perceived attributes of an effective elementary bilingual education program

according to administrators, teachers, and parents?

The following three subsections present the attributes of an effective elementary

bilingual education program as perceived by administrators of the elementary bilingual

education program, elementary bilingual education teachers, and parents of elementary

bilingual education students. An effective elementary bilingual education program was

defined as a program within a school where:

   (a) more than 40% of the students were identified as English Language Learners,
   (b) more than 50% of the students were identified as economically disadvantaged,
   (c) no students were exempted from taking the English or Spanish Texas Assessment
       of Knowledge and Skills due to language issues, and
   (d) the school met the criteria for a rating of either Recognized or Exemplary in the
       Texas Academic Excellence Indicator System (TEA, 2000b).

However, it was not necessary for the administrators, teachers, and parents to be

stakeholders in an elementary bilingual education program that met this definition of

effectiveness. Rather, the focus of this study was the examination of the attributes that the

stakeholders perceived to be important to the relative effectiveness of their program.

*Administrator Perceptions*

The principals of elementary bilingual elementary schools, the bilingual education director, and the district superintendent were invited to participate in the study. Eight principals, the director, and the superintendent responded to a series of individual interview questions regarding the perceived attributes of an effective elementary bilingual education program (Appendix C). The administrator perceptions were combined and coded by the researcher as they related to the components of the seven attributes of effective elementary bilingual education programs that have been identified in previous research on effective elementary bilingual education programs. These seven attributes included: (a) leadership, vision, and goals; (b) district, school, and classroom climate; (c) program articulation; (d) organization, accountability, and assessment; (e) quality people; (f) parental and community involvement; and (g) curriculum and instruction. Additional codes were assigned to emergent themes that were not identified in the literature review. The additional themes that emerged from the administrator interviews included: (a) funding, (b) materials, (c) staffing, (d) class size, (e) socioeconomic status, and (f) translation of materials.

The administrators perceived program articulation (21%) as the most prevalent attribute of an effective elementary bilingual education program. The administrators perceived leadership, vision, and goals (15%) and quality people (15%) as the second most prevalent attributes. Taken as a whole, the emergent themes (14%) were perceived as the third most prevalent attribute by the administrators, followed by the parental and community involvement (13%), district, school, and classroom climate (11%), and

curriculum and instruction (6%) attributes. The administrators perceived organization, accountability, and assessment (5%) as the least prevalent attribute of an effective elementary bilingual education program. Figure 1 provides a graphical representation of the overall distribution of the coded administrator responses to the perceived attributes and emergent themes.



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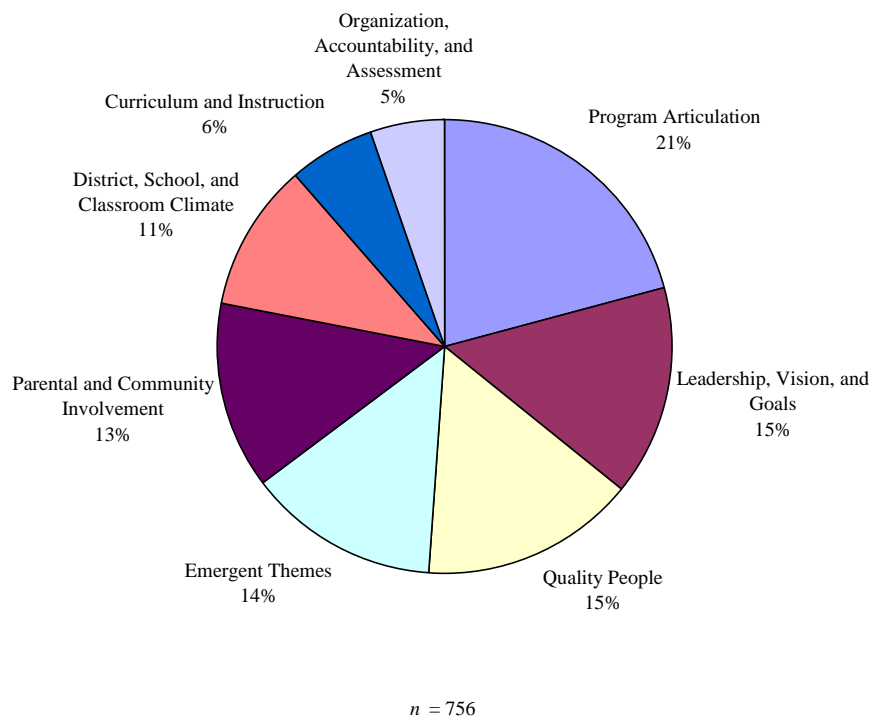
**Figure 1. Overall distribution of coded administrator responses to the perceived attributes and emergent themes.**

Each coded administrator response was also labeled as a confirmation or a concern by the researcher. A response was labeled as a confirmation if the attribute or emergent theme was perceived as something that contributed to the success of English Language Learners. A response was labeled as a concern if the attribute or emergent

theme was perceived as something that was either not currently present or not working well in the classroom, school, or district.

The majority of the administrator responses regarding the perceived attributes and emergent themes were coded as confirmations. For instance, the administrators perceived program articulation (73%) as the most confirming attribute and quality people (60%) as the least confirming attribute. Figure 2 graphically presents the overall distribution of coded administrator confirmations and concerns regarding the perceived attributes and emergent themes. The perceived attributes and emergent themes are presented in the order they were mentioned by the administrators.
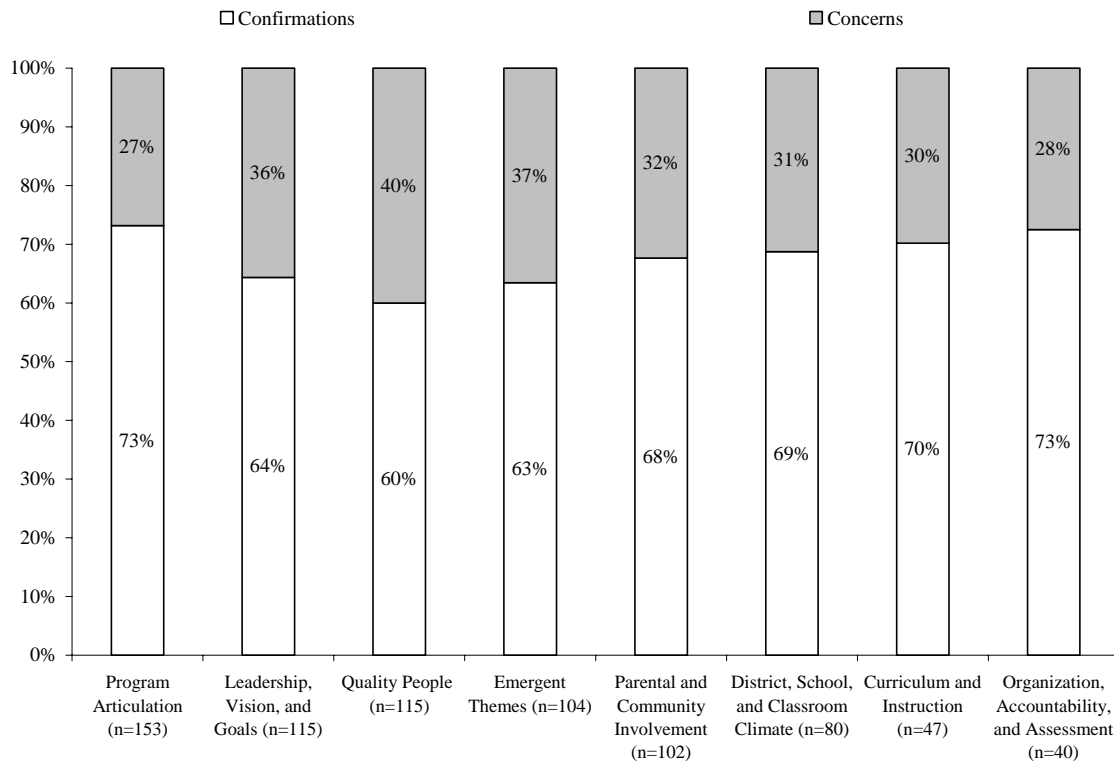


**Figure 2. Overall distribution of coded administrator confirmations and concerns regarding the perceived attributes and emergent themes.**

The following narrative is a brief description of the administrator confirmations and

concerns regarding the seven attributes.

As shown in Figure 2, most of the administrators shared a confirmation regarding

program articulation. One administrator commented:

> Our primary focus was to make this one campus with one purpose, which was
> equal success for everyone. That was our big thing. When I learned that we were
> going to become a bilingual campus, even before we hired our teachers. I made
> sure that everyone knew that we were all going to be together and a team.

On the other hand, a few of the administrators expressed a concern regarding program

articulation. One administrator responded, "Before we had a change in leadership at

central office, it strengthened us as a campus because we realized that we did not have

the support from central office. If we were going to make decisions, they had to be made

on our campus."

Many of the administrators also conveyed a confirmation regarding leadership,

vision, and goals. One administrator mentioned:

> Central office leaders are very strong and have given us some very clear
> directives, which have helped us because we were kind of in a spongy place for a
> while, but we are not anymore. They are available if we have questions. They
> pick up the telephone, they answer our questions, they do the research and they
> are always open. That has helped us immensely.

Conversely, other administrators shared a concern regarding leadership, vision, and goals.

One administrator commented, "We are working, we are getting there, but it has just been

a very slow process in getting everyone going in the same direction. If you don't have a

good plan in place then things are very slow."

Many of the administrators expressed a confirmation regarding quality people.

One administrator responded, "The number one thing that contributes to the success of

English Language Learners is the quality of the teacher in the classroom. That pretty much overrides everything else." On the contrary, some of the administrators conveyed a concern regarding quality people. One administrator mentioned, "Not all of our bilingual and ESL teachers understand how second language learners learn. They know that the students are learning a second language, but they don't understand the process of how to teach it."

Many of the administrators also conveyed a confirmation regarding parental and community involvement. One administrator mentioned, "One of things that we do positively, we have really stepped out with family specialists who are really engaging and empowering the parents by helping them problem solve and get services." On the other hand, other administrators shared a concern regarding parental and community involvement. One administrator commented:

> We need some serious professional development on cultural difference. That is the biggest complaint that I get from parents that are coming from other schools. Just the way they are greeted, the way they are received. That is one of the disadvantages of the cluster site school because parents aren't at their home school and the perception is that they were kicked off of their home campus.

Many of the administrators expressed a confirmation regarding district, school, and classroom climate. One administrator responded:

> I wanted the kids to come in feeling like this is their home. I had a huge celebration on the first day of school with mariachi bands and balloons, kind of a fiesta on the first day of school. We have continued that embracing because it has to start at the top. From the custodians to the women in the cafeteria, we are all here together for the students.

Conversely, some of the administrators conveyed a concern regarding district, school, and classroom climate. One administrator mentioned, "Some of things that contribute the

least to the success of English Language Learners include decisions that do not promote

high expectations, negative attitudes toward English Language Learners, and negative

attitudes toward the parents or community as a whole."

Most of the administrators shared a confirmation regarding curriculum and

instruction. One administrator commented:

> Do your students know your goals and objectives for the day? If they go home, and mom and dad ask them what they learned today and they answer nothing, well that is not acceptable. Every child needs to know what did you learn in math, reading, science, why did you learn it, how is this going to help us?

On the contrary, other administrators expressed a concern regarding curriculum and

instruction. One administrator responded, "The other thing with these less effective

teachers is they rarely get deep into the curriculum. They need help phrasing their

questions to give a little more wait time and allow the kids to think a little bit longer."

Most of the administrators also conveyed a confirmation regarding organization,

accountability, and assessment. One administrator mentioned:

> The reason we have gotten where we are with data is having that small group. We meet as soon data comes in. We meet at the grade level. We look at everyone's scores. We meet as a group. We diagnose where we are and plan our next steps with the kids. I feel that our process is really good right now for the data. Our next step is ensuring that our interventions match the diagnosis really well and that we continue to broaden our interventions.

However, a few of the administrators shared a concern regarding organization,

accountability, and assessment. One administrator commented, "I was disappointed

because we were doing family fun night where we were doing math and science activities

and there were one or two teachers from different grade levels that were not there."

*Administrator Perceptions of Program Articulation*

The administrators perceived program articulation as the most prevalent attribute of an effective elementary bilingual education program. This attribute was comprised of six components that were identified from previous research on effective elementary bilingual education programs. These components included:

a) the development and maintenance of clearly articulated roles and responsibilities;
b) dynamic two-way communication;
c) focused and sustained supports between central office and school-level staff;
d) strong leadership, credibility, and respect;
e) a common program of instruction that is properly scoped, sequenced, and articulated across grade levels; and
f) a program of instruction that has been aligned with developmentally appropriate practices and student language proficiency levels in English and the students' first language.

All of the administrators (100%) perceived that an effective program of instruction for English Language Learners must be aligned with developmentally appropriate practices and student language proficiency levels in English and the students' first language. All of the administrators (100%) also perceived that it was essential to develop and provide strong leadership, credibility, and respect for the program. Almost all of the administrators (90%) perceived that it was important to have focused and sustained supports between central office and school-level staff.

Most of the administrators (80%) perceived that dynamic two-way communication was an important part of articulating the program. Many of the administrators (70%) perceived that a common program of instruction that was properly scoped, sequenced, and articulated across grade levels was an important part of an effective elementary bilingual education program. Less than half of the administrators

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(40%) perceived the importance of the development and maintenance of clearly

articulated roles and responsibilities. Figure 3 provides a graphical representation of the

distribution of administrators who perceived a component of the program articulation
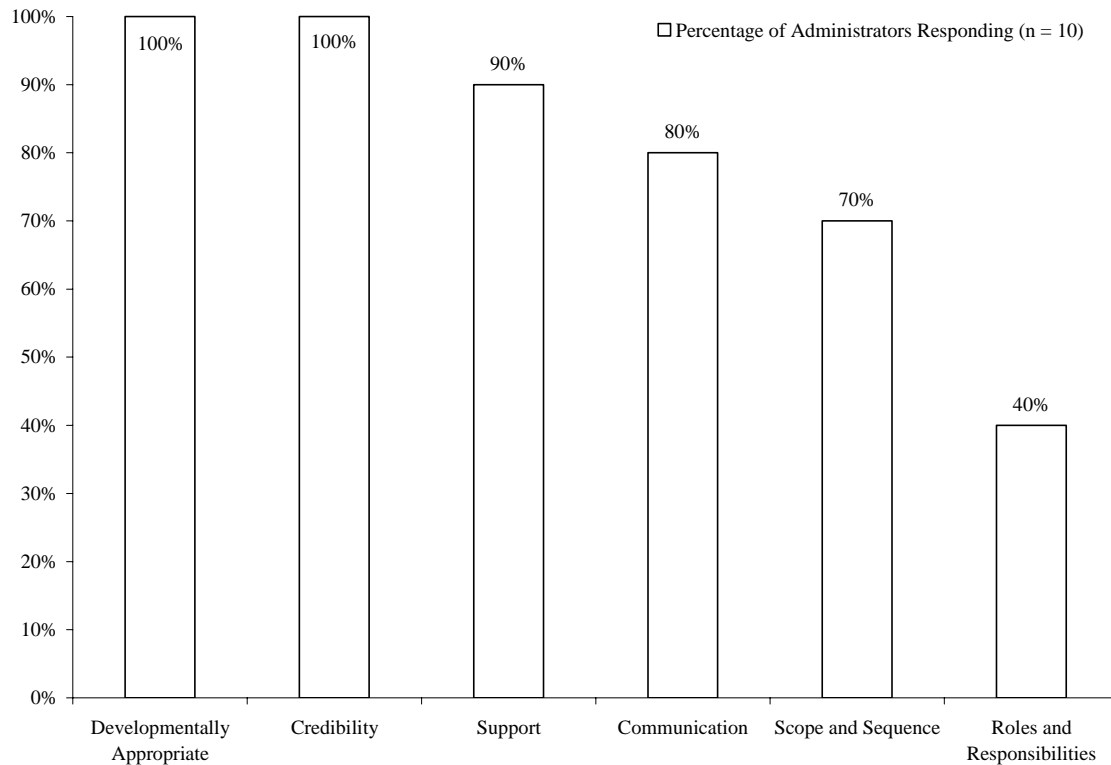
attribute.



**Figure 3. Distribution of administrators who perceived a component of the program articulation attribute.**

As shown in Figure 3, all of the administrators mentioned the importance of a

developmentally appropriate elementary bilingual education program. Some of the

administrators expressed confirmations about the developmentally appropriateness of the

elementary bilingual education program.

One administrator mentioned:

> I think they need to be using their Spanish at home. I want them to use English, too, but in many cases, they cannot use English at home. Keeping their first language is so important and we need to have a good balance. We need to be teaching the content in the earlier grades in their native language. They can then make the transition more easily. Simple immersion is not the best way.

Another administrator commented, "The next important contributing factor to success is the consistency in the philosophy of how you teach an English Language Learner." On the other hand, some of the administrators shared concerns about the developmentally appropriateness of the elementary bilingual education program. One administrator mentioned:

> I am disappointed in the lack of English instruction in our bilingual program. I think, a lot of times parents will deny the program because there is no or very little English being taught. There is a model on the Web site but the teachers close their doors and nobody is following it.

Another administrator commented:

> I think we have just got to push these children to speak English. I think they are trying, I hear them in the hallway. I think the younger children are doing better, but the older children are so used to it that they use it as a crutch. But, the problem is compounded because they go home and they speak Spanish all the time.

All of the administrators also mentioned the importance of strong leadership, credibility, and respect for the elementary bilingual education program. Some of the administrators shared confirmations about the level of strong leadership, credibility, and respect for the program. One administrator responded:

> Just that constant push support dance. If I am not pushing them, then it is so easy to get complacent and then the kids suffer. But, if I push too hard, then they will end up in the mental hospital and then the kids will suffer. I just want to be the best leader that I can for them to know that I am making a difference.

Another administrator commented:

> There needs to be a real continued effort to help teachers understand and to continue to promote excellence and not just become frustrated. Good leaders will reinforce their ability and the leaders at central office ability to carry on the program. Even though they may be in trouble, if they continue to try, I think that is a very important part for principals to play.

Conversely, some of the administrators expressed concerns about the level of strong leadership, credibility, and respect for the program. One administrator mentioned, "I would like to see more focus on developing leadership from the department and the district." Another administrator commented, "We have had problems because we did not have a strong leadership overall at the district level."

Almost all of the administrators mentioned the importance of focused and sustained support between central office and school-level staff. Some of the administrators shared confirmations about the level of support. One administrator commented, "This year, I believe we have the correct leaders in place at central office. They have been extremely supportive." On the contrary, a few of the administrators expressed concerns about the level of focused and sustained support between central office and school-level staff. One administrator mentioned, "I think the willingness to support is there. It's the timing of that support that may be a day late and a dollar short."

While the administrators shared a range of perceptions regarding the components of the program articulation attribute, the overall perception of this attribute was confirming. While the majority of administrator perceptions of the roles and responsibilities component were concerns (60%), the majority of the administrator perceptions of the rest of the components were confirmations. Figure 4 graphically

presents the distribution of coded administrator confirmations and concerns regarding the

components of the program articulation attribute.
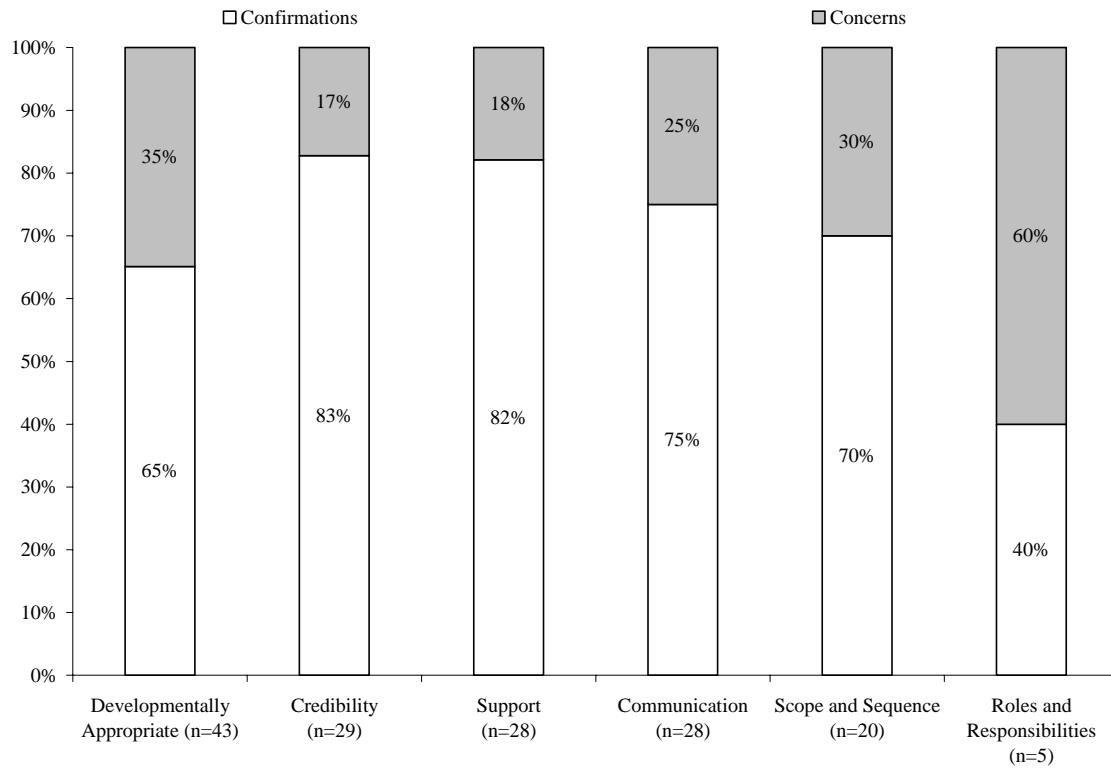


**Figure 4. Distribution of coded administrator confirmations and concerns regarding the components of the program articulation attribute.**

*Administrator Perceptions of Leadership, Vision, and Goals*

The administrators perceived leadership, vision, and goals, along with quality people, as the second most prevalent attribute of an effective elementary bilingual education program. The leadership, vision, and goals attribute was comprised of 12 components that were identified from previous research on effective bilingual education programs. These components included leaders who:

a) are well informed of the rationale for bilingual education;
b) share an active commitment to bilingualism;
c) proactively involve teachers, the community, and the private sector in the design and development of the bilingual program;
d) are open to innovation;
e) create a vision and set of goals with the school community;
f) define high expectations of all students;
g) publish and disseminate high expectations so that staff, parents, and students can articulate the purpose of the school in their own words;
h) are aware of the social, political, and economic forces that interact in the educational arena;
i) raise questions about the systems, organizational frameworks, and leadership theories that privilege certain groups and/or perspectives over others;
j) challenge oppression in all forms;
k) encourage culturally and linguistically different students to find and use their individual and collective voices; and
l) transform schools from being sorting mechanisms for the larger global market to being institutions of hope and social change.

All of the administrators (100%) perceived that an effective elementary bilingual education program had leaders who were well informed of the rationale for bilingual education. Most of the administrators (80%) perceived that it was important for leaders to create a vision and a set of goals with the school community. More than half of the administrators (60%) perceived that it was important for leaders to involve teachers, the community, and the private sector in the proactive design and development of the bilingual program. More than half of the administrators (60%) also perceived that it was

important for leaders to be aware of the social, political, and economic forces that interact in the educational arena.

Less than half of the administrators (40%) perceived the importance of publishing and disseminating high expectations so that staff, parents, and students can articulate the purpose of the school in their own words. Only a few the administrators (20%) perceived that it was important for leaders to challenge oppression in all forms, share an active commitment to bilingualism, and raise questions about the systems, organizational frameworks, and leadership theories that privilege certain groups and/or perspectives over others. While the high expectations, student voice, and transformational components were identified as components of the leadership attribute in the second chapter, none of the administrators perceived these to be components of an effective elementary bilingual education program. Figure 5 provides a graphical representation of the distribution of administrators who perceived a component of the leadership, vision, and goals attribute.
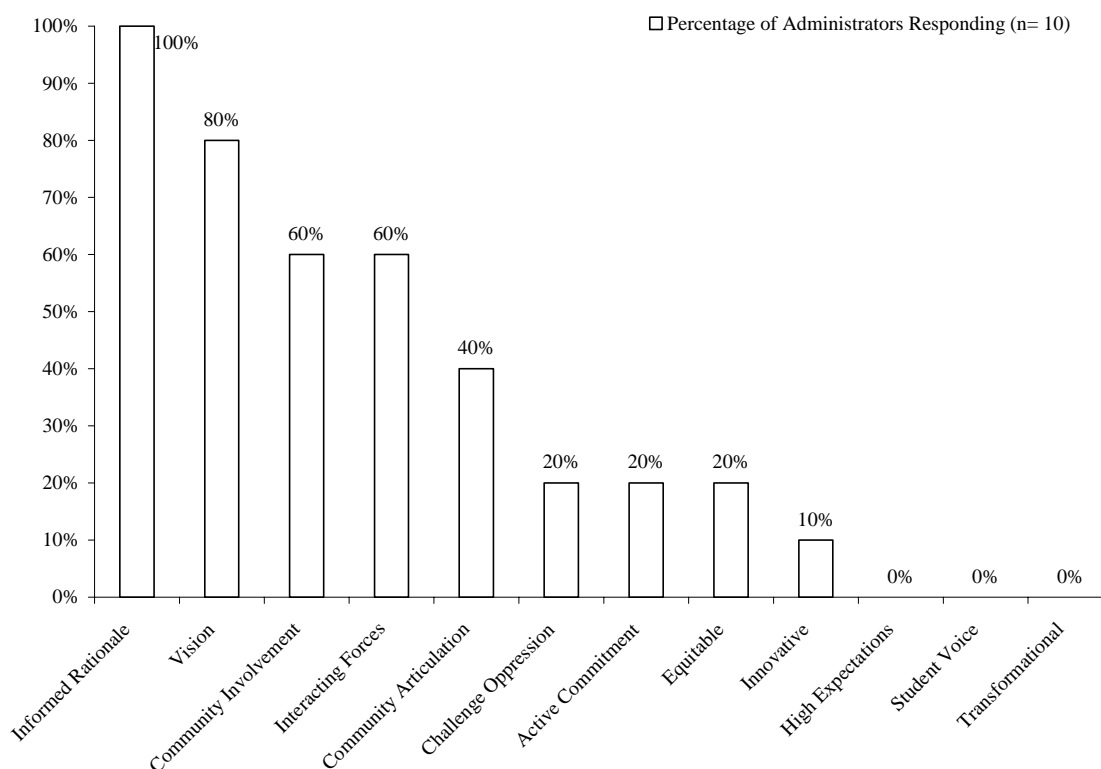
**Figure 5. Distribution of administrators who perceived a component of the leadership, vision, and goals attribute.**

As shown in Figure 5, all of the administrators reported that it was important for the educational leadership to be well informed of the rationale for bilingual education. Some of the administrators shared confirmations about the level of knowledge that administrators had about the rationale for bilingual education. One administrator mentioned, "I think, first, a very strong knowledge of the research and purpose of bilingual education and second language acquisition." Another administrator commented:

> One thing I did when I became a bilingual campus is I got my English as a Second Language certification. That was really important to me. I took the training. I felt as if I was one of the individuals making decisions for English Language Learners, I felt like I needed to understand what that was. So, that was the first thing I did.

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A third administrator responded, "We have principals who want to learn about the program, if they do not already know. They are constantly calling and asking." On the other hand, some of the administrators expressed concerns about the level of knowledge that administrators had about the rationale for bilingual education. One administrator mentioned:

> Research wise, I do not know. When I read the research, I get two different stories. That is not my area of expertise. For me, not being an ELL learner, I am not sure. I do not have any personal background with that. That is why I would leave it up to the experts.

Another administrator commented:

> I think people are doing the best they can with what they know. I think it will continue to only get better once they get more familiar with laws and this is how is should look and how it should work.

A third administrator responded, "I did not understand it - bilingual, monolingual, transitional - I did not know any of this. I should have been put through a class during the summer."

While most of the administrators reported that it was important for the educational leadership to develop and articulate a clear vision, a little more than half of the administrators reported that it was important to involve the community in the development of the vision. Some of the administrators shared confirmations regarding the development of the vision for the elementary bilingual education program. One administrator mentioned:

> We need to have a strong plan, a strong focus. My teachers are so sick of hearing me say this but you have to have a target and to be able to focus in on the target. We have to focus in like a laser, just very specific goals, targets find a way.

Another administrator commented:

> I think this year is the first year that the district even has a clear vision. Yet, the vision is not going to happen because someone tells you what the vision is. I believe it is something that evolves. We haven't had the leadership in that position. We will get there, but, you can't create a vision in a year; it evolves.

A third administrator responded:

> I am working very hard to build one family where we are all united working together and we will do whatever it takes to be successful. I have sat in principals meetings and listened to staff from other campuses. My desire has been from day one to work hard that we are all one family working together. We will do whatever it takes together to achieve, because we are all here for the kids.

Conversely, some of the administrators expressed concerns about the development of the vision for the elementary bilingual education program. One administrator mentioned:

> Let me start with the English Language Learner program. We have to get the vision. It has got to become crystal clear; it is muddy and I believe that it does not have to be muddy. I truly believe we can have a clear system of vision for the style of learners. That is really, really important.

Another administrator commented:

> When they started that whole thing with the committee meetings (to expand the elementary bilingual education program), they (the central office administration) had a direction that they knew they were going to go and the committees were just for show. That is the way the bilingual people felt about it.

A third administrator responded, "We just did not have good district leadership."

More than half of the administrators reported that it was important for the educational leadership to be aware of the social, political, and economic forces that interact in the educational arena. Some of the administrators shared confirmations about the different levels of awareness of the social, political, and economic forces.

One administrator mentioned:

> I always tell my parents that their kids are so incredibly lucky. I am always telling my parents that your want you kids to grow up with reading and writing in Spanish. Look at the job market. It is exploding in that area. That is such an incredible gift. I harp on that constantly when I am in a parent meeting. Lots of parents want to dump their kids in English. But, I don't want them to lose that.

Another administrator commented:

> Respect has got to start with the children who will leave here speaking two languages. A language that will be a part of the culture of this area as well as English that will get them involved in commerce and further education. I hope that we begin to melt even more.

On the contrary, some of the administrators expressed concerns about the different levels of awareness of the social, political, and economic forces. One administrator mentioned:

> We have also done a lot of research on children of poverty, which is very typical of these parents. They don't put a lot of value in material things. Where they put their value is in their relationship is their child. They will come over here and make excuses for that child instead of taking ownership. It is that kind of attitude that we face.

Another administrator commented, "We had a situation this year where the Spanish kids that are in the English classes were fighting with the Spanish only kids. That was foreign to me, I did not get that. It has just been interesting."

While the administrators shared a range of opinions regarding the components of the leadership, vision, and goals attribute, the overall perception of this attribute was confirming. For instance, the administrators perceived active commitment (100%) and innovative (100%) as the most confirming components and challenge oppression (50%) as the least confirming component. Figure 6 graphically presents the distribution of coded administrator confirmations and concerns regarding the components of the leadership, vision, and goals attribute.

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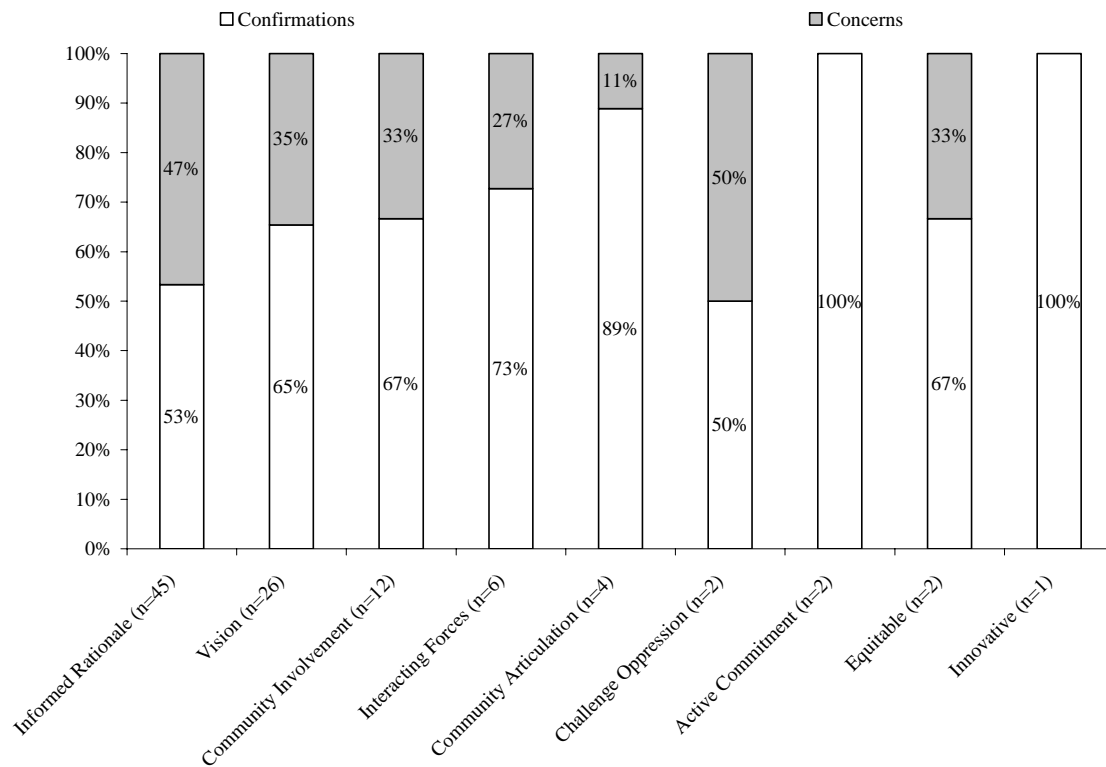
**Figure 6. Distribution of coded administrator confirmations and concerns regarding the components of the leadership, vision, and goals attribute.**

*Administrator Perceptions of Quality People*

The administrators perceived quality people, along with leadership, vision, and goals, as the second most prevalent attribute of an effective elementary bilingual education program. The quality people attribute was comprised of six components that were identified from previous research on effective bilingual education programs. These components included:

a) screening teacher applicants to ensure full written and oral proficiency in both languages;
b) fully credentialed bilingual and English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers continuously acquiring new knowledge regarding best practices in curriculum, instruction, and assessment;
c) all educators receiving appropriate training in the students' native language
d) all teachers in the school regularly receiving information about bilingual education, the use of data, ESL strategies, and students' cultural and linguistic characteristics that serve as assets to their academic success;
e) examining the distribution of teachers with varying levels of education, experience, and certification; and
f) improving recruitment, placement, professional development, and evaluation processes.

All of the administrators (100%) perceived that fully credentialed bilingual and ESL teachers who continuously acquire new knowledge regarding best practices in curriculum, instruction, and assessment were an important part of an effective elementary bilingual education program. Most of the administrators (80%) perceived the importance of all educators receiving appropriate training in the students' native language. Many of the administrators (70%) perceived that the improvement of recruitment, placement, professional development, and evaluation processes was an important part of an effective elementary bilingual education program.

Many of the administrators (70%) also perceived the importance of all teachers in the school regularly receiving information about bilingual education, the use of data, ESL strategies, and students' cultural and linguistic characteristics that serve as assets to their academic success. Only a few of the administrators perceived that examining the distribution of teachers with varying levels of education, experience, and certification and screening teacher applicants to ensure full written and oral proficiency in both languages were important parts of an effective elementary bilingual education program. Figure 7 provides a graphical representation of the distribution of administrators who perceived a component of the quality people attribute.
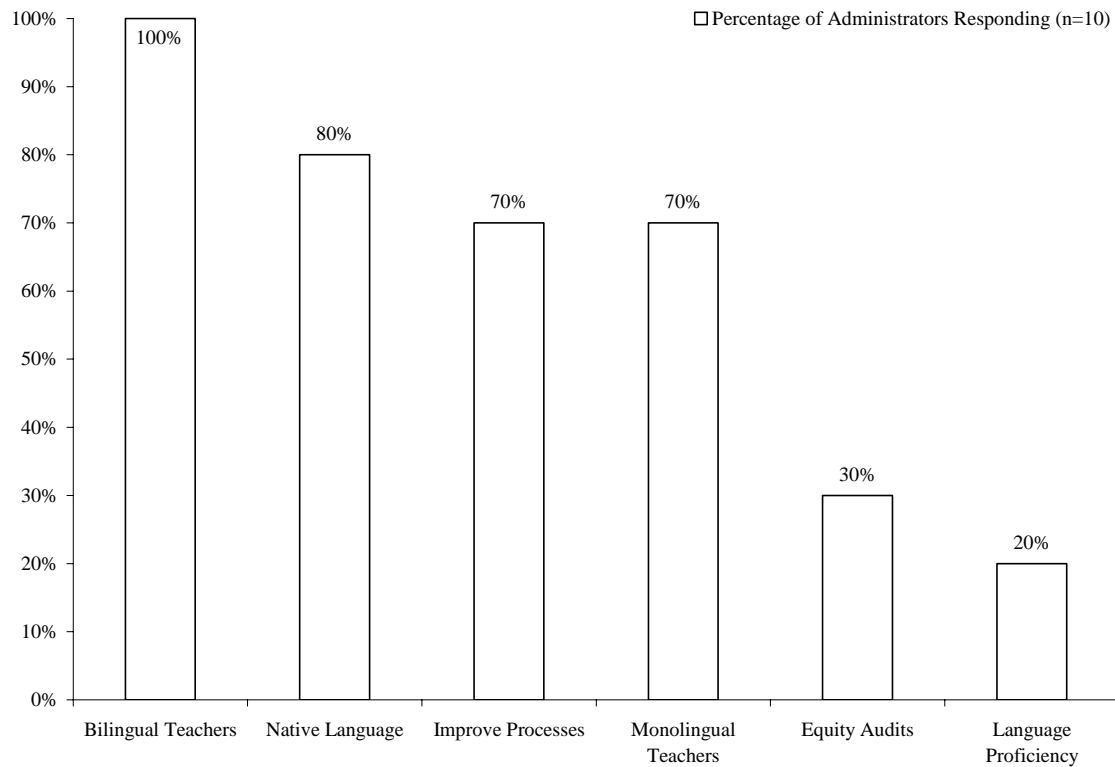


**Figure 7. Distribution of administrators who perceived a component of the quality people attribute.**

As shown in Figure 7, all of the administrators mentioned the importance of fully credentialed bilingual and ESL teachers continuously acquiring new knowledge regarding best practices in curriculum, instruction, and assessment. Some of the administrators shared confirmations about the differences in the quality and preparation of bilingual teachers. One administrator mentioned, "The number one most important thing is quality teachers." Another administrator commented, "Good teachers. Good teachers. Good teachers." One the other hand, some of the administrators expressed concerns about the differences in the quality and preparation of bilingual teachers. One administrator mentioned, "The quality of the teacher goes against contributing to success." Another administrator commented, "I have a lot of inexperienced teachers too, who have just been lost. Everything is new to them. Because they have not known what to do with these struggling bilingual students, the teachers are at a loss."

Most of the administrators agreed that high quality bilingual and ESL teachers were not the only personnel who contributed to the success of English Language Learners. Administrators, counselors, nurses, and teachers – every educator who interacts with English Language Learners and their families – must receive appropriate training in the students' native language. Some of the administrators shared confirmations about the importance of knowing the language of the English Language Learners. One of the administrators mentioned:

> I have made it a point to hire a lot of bilingual staff to communicate with our parents. So, I would say that I have at the very least 1/3 of my staff and more than half of my paraprofessionals are bilingual. We just have so many bilingual people on campus. So, the parents do feel comfortable in coming in.

Another administrator commented:

> I would like to learn to speak Spanish. I understand a lot, but speak very little and so I always have to have someone help me translate. It is hard being a principal of a bilingual school and when half of your community does not speak the language. We make it work, lots of smiles and lots of hugs, lots of translating but it is not efficient.

Conversely, some of the administrators expressed concerns about the level of training in the students' native language. One administrator mentioned:

> I would say that it has been a big weakness that I do not speak Spanish. That has been a tremendous struggle for me. One whole class did not pass the benchmark and I met with every parent, but it was through a translator and that loses so much of the feelings and what I need to say. I think that is truly a barrier.

Another administrator commented, "I know some Spanish but having a fully bilingual administrator makes a huge difference." It is important to note that none of the principals of the elementary bilingual education cluster schools in this study were bilingual and only one assistant principal was bilingual.

Most of the administrators reported that it was important to provide all teachers in the school with information about bilingual education, the use of data, ESL strategies, and students' cultural and linguistic characteristics that serve as assets to their academic success. One of the administrator confirmations about the differences in the level of understanding of regular education teachers included, "I think the teaching techniques for English Language Learners for all of our teachers needs to be highlighted."

On the contrary, one of the administrator concerns about the differences in the level of

understanding of regular education teachers included:

> Our bilingual teachers have a good understanding about how they acquire language so they know that writing is going to be one of the last things to come. So, their writing is going to look phonetic, but, regular teachers don't understand that. The kid gets transitioned into a regular classroom, they get this terrible writer, and all of a sudden, they are putting the kid in special ed. Well, that has nothing to do with it. That has happened multiple times. Our whole staff just needs that cultural awareness.

Some of the administrators reported the importance of improving the recruitment,

placement, professional development, and evaluation processes so that all students have

access to a similar level of teacher quality that is independent of their race, class, or

language. One of the administrator confirmations about the issues of recruitment and

placement of teachers included:

> I think Human Resources is open to suggestions on how we can attract and maintain really good teachers. They have mentioned that they are having a job fair and wanted me to be there to help with that. So, I think they are wanting to get the best people and maintain those people.

However, one of the administrator concerns about the issues of recruitment and

placement of teachers included, "The Human Resources Department needs to be very,

very aware of what needs to happen in the classroom and I am not so sure that it does."

While the administrators shared a range of opinions regarding the components of

the quality people attribute, the overall perception of this attribute was confirming. While

the majority of the administrator perceptions of the equity audits (75%) and improve

processes (62%) components were concerns, the majority of the administrator

perceptions of the rest of the components were confirmations. Figure 8 graphically

presents the distribution of coded administrator confirmations and concerns regarding the

components of the quality people attribute.
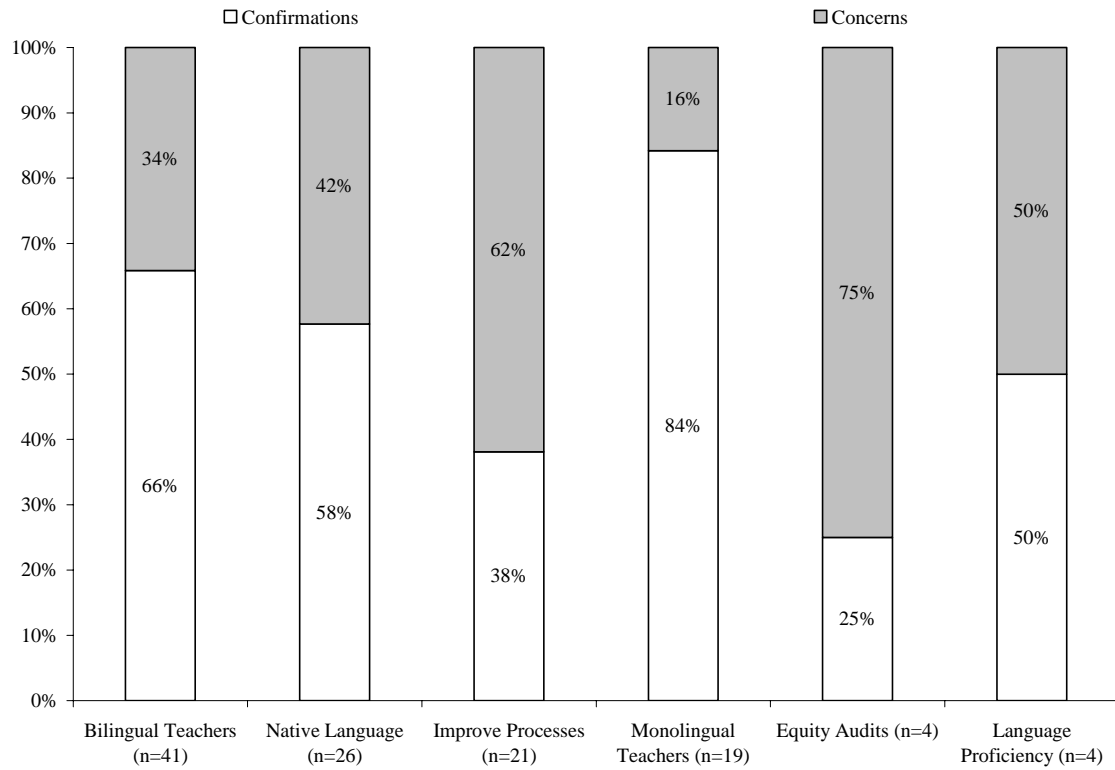


**Figure 8. Distribution of coded administrator confirmations and concerns regarding the components of the quality people attribute.**

*Administrator Perceptions of Emergent Themes*

Taken as a whole, the emergent themes were perceived as the third most prevalent attribute of an effective elementary bilingual education program by the administrators. This attribute was composed of six themes that emerged from the individual interviews with administrators. These emergent themes included:

a) funding,
b) materials,
c) staffing,
d) class size,
e) socioeconomic status, and
f) translation of materials.

Almost all of the administrators (90%) perceived that funding was an important part of an effective elementary bilingual education program. Most of the administrators (80%) perceived that staffing and materials were also important. Half of the administrators (50%) perceived the importance of socioeconomic status and translation of materials. Less than half (40%) of the administrators perceived that class size was an important part of an effective elementary bilingual education program. Figure 9 provides a graphical representation of the distribution of administrators who perceived an emergent theme.

Chart with percentages: Funding 90%, Staffing 80%, Materials 80%, Socioeconomic 50%, Translation 50%, Class size 40%.
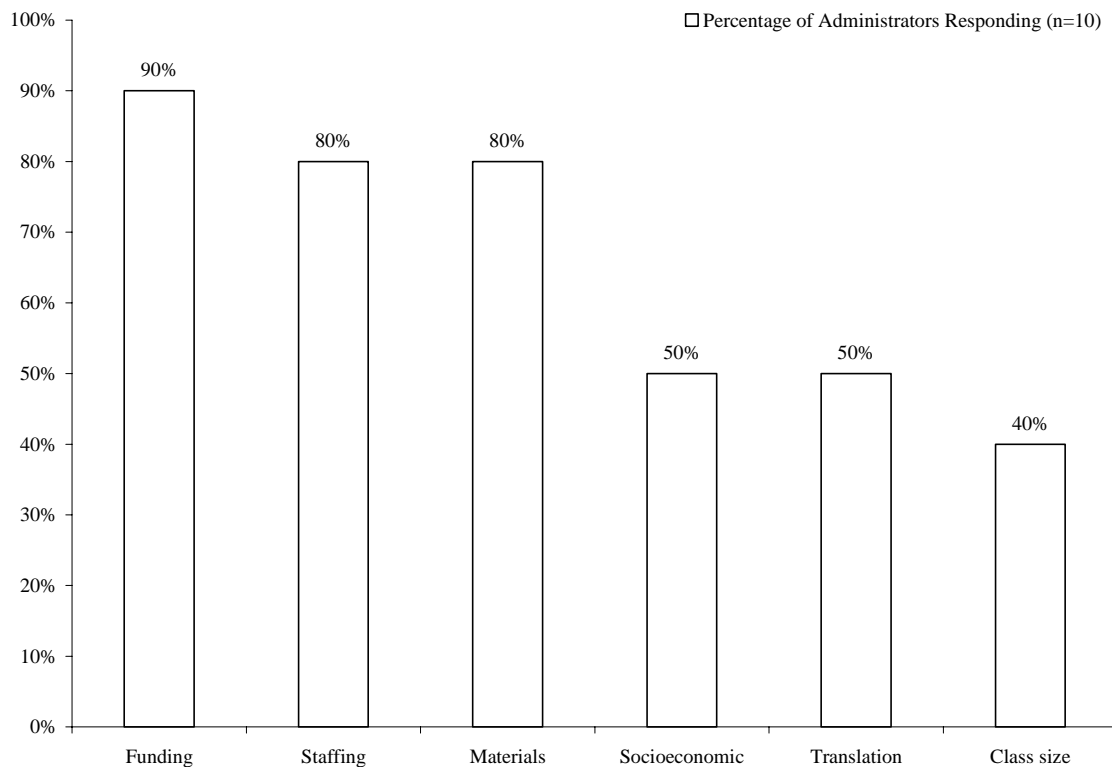
**Figure 9. Distribution of administrators who perceived an emergent theme.**

As shown in Figure 9, almost all of the administrators mentioned the importance of funding, staffing, and materials to the effectiveness of an elementary bilingual education program. Some of the administrators shared confirmations about the issue of alignment and timing of resources, the quantity and quality of equipment and materials, and the allocation of staff. One of the administrators mentioned, "You have to be willing not only to verbally support English Language Learners; you have to put it into your budget that these students and teachers will require more cost." Another administrator commented:

> We try really hard that everything that we have in English, that if there is a Spanish component, then they get it. Not all the Spanish materials are equal in quality. So, I don't just buy it because it is there.

A third administrator responded, "The fact that we have bilingual assistants who can go in and help the teachers to meet the needs of the struggling students whether it is ESL or bilingual students is a great improvement." On the other hand, some of the administrators shared concerns about the issue of alignment and timing of resources, the quantity and quality of equipment and materials, and the allocation of staff. One of the administrators mentioned:

> I think that our English Language Learner department is doing the best that we can with the number of people that we have to do the work. When you look at others district that have as many English Language Learners as we do; a neighboring district has twenty-four people in their central office doing what four people are trying to do.

Another administrator commented:

> We went through a struggle to get these materials. I don't think anyone knew that we did not have them. So, all the schools needed money and it took about 4 months to finally decide we are going to allocate certain money to each school.

A third administrator responded, "I will make sure that when I prepare the budget next year, I will have some funds there that I did not have this year. I assumed the district would take care of that and they did not."

More than half of the administrators mentioned the influence of socioeconomic status on the effectiveness of an elementary bilingual education program. One administrator mentioned, "One of the problems with bilingualism is that it is invariably wrapped in with economic power. So, the parents sense of advocacy for their child varies tremendously." Another administrator commented, "I think sometimes parents are afraid to go up to the schools. In certain areas, you cannot get them out of the building. It is the socioeconomic piece that drives that." A third administrator responded, "About half of

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our bilingual kids are on free and reduced lunch. This adds to our economical need

situation. We find that parents from different economic backgrounds do not really mix."

More than half of the administrators also addressed translation of materials for

teacher, student, and parent use. One of the administrator confirmations about the

quantity and quality of translated materials included:

> Everything that we do, that we produce, goes home in two languages. We have
> the newsletters that we create in the office that are translated and they all go home
> in Spanish. This helps with our basic communications. When we have meetings,
> we always have meetings in English and someone will be there to translate for us.

On the contrary, one of the administrator concerns about the quantity and quality of

translated materials included:

> The student handbook needs to be in Spanish and in English. Every document that
> comes out of the legal department in every discipline. The parents need to be
> spoken to in a language that they understand. When our parents get into trouble,
> there is not the advocacy there within the district, for it to be a fair district.

While the administrators shared a range of opinions regarding the emergent

themes, the overall perception was confirming. For instance, the administrators perceived

class size (88%) as the most confirming theme and funding (57%) and socioeconomic

status (57%) as the least confirming themes. Figure 10 graphically presents the

distribution of coded administrator confirmations and concerns regarding the emergent
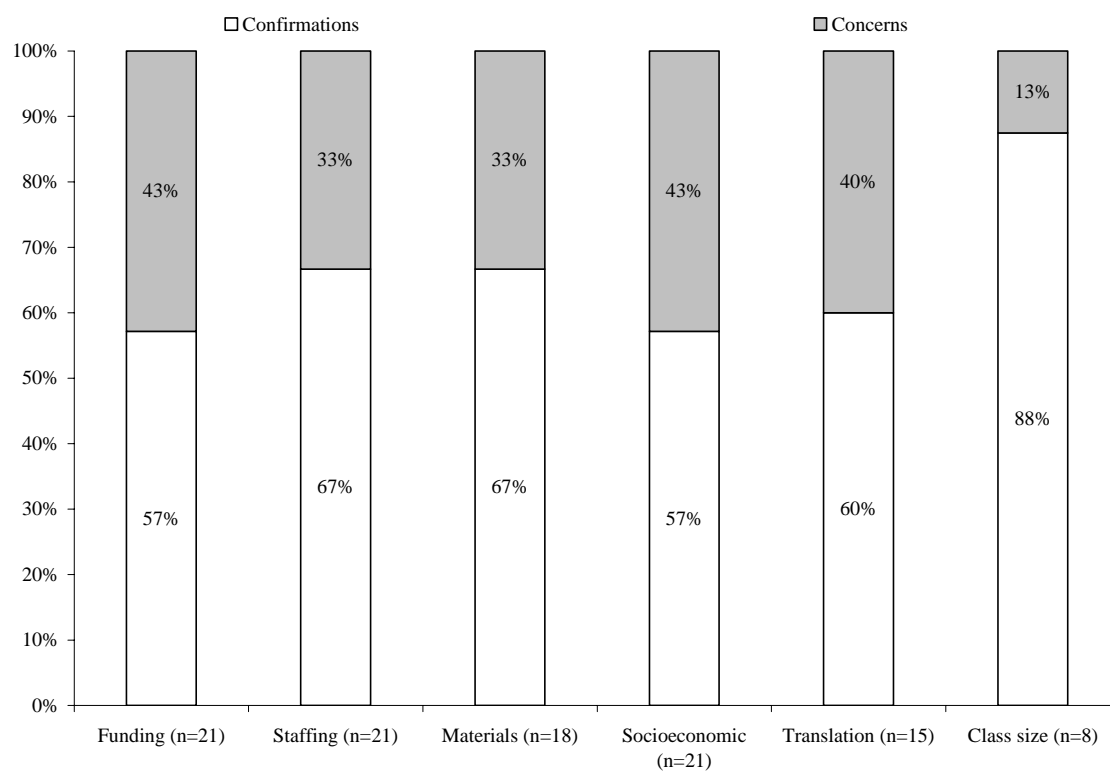
themes.

**Figure 10. Distribution of coded administrator confirmations and concerns regarding the emergent themes.**

*Administrator Perceptions of Parental and Community Involvement*

The administrators perceived parental and community involvement as the fourth most prevalent attribute of an effective elementary bilingual education program. This attribute was comprised of six components that were identified from previous research on effective bilingual education programs. These components included:

a) all parents know the rationale and the critical components of the program;
b) parents and community establish partnerships with schools, extend learning into the home, and reinforce academic values outside school;
c) all parents are strong advocates of the program;
d) stakeholders implement effective strategies for overcoming common obstacles to involving parents and community members in the education of English Language Learners;
e) educators carefully examine what is actually known about culturally different families, their attitudes regarding education, and how they support their children's education through the family and their informal social networks; and
f) community family centers provide parental information, social service referrals, lending libraries, meeting places, and translation services.

All of the administrators (100%) perceived that a careful examination of what is actually known about culturally different families, their attitudes regarding education, and how they support their children's education through the family and their informal social networks was an important part of an effective elementary bilingual education program. Almost all of the administrators (90%) perceived the importance of community family centers that provide parental information, social service referrals, lending libraries, meeting places, and translation services. Almost all of the administrators (90%) also perceived that all parents should know the rationale and the critical components of an effective program.

Most of the administrators (80%) perceived that effective strategies for overcoming common obstacles to involving parents and community members in the

education of English Language Learners were an important part of an effective

elementary bilingual education program. Many of the administrators perceived the

importance of parents who were strong advocates of the program. Less than half of the

administrators (40%) perceived it was important for parents and community members to

establish partnerships with schools, extend learning into the home, and reinforce

academic values outside school. Figure 11 provides a graphical representation of the

distribution of administrators who perceived a component of the parental and community

involvement attribute.
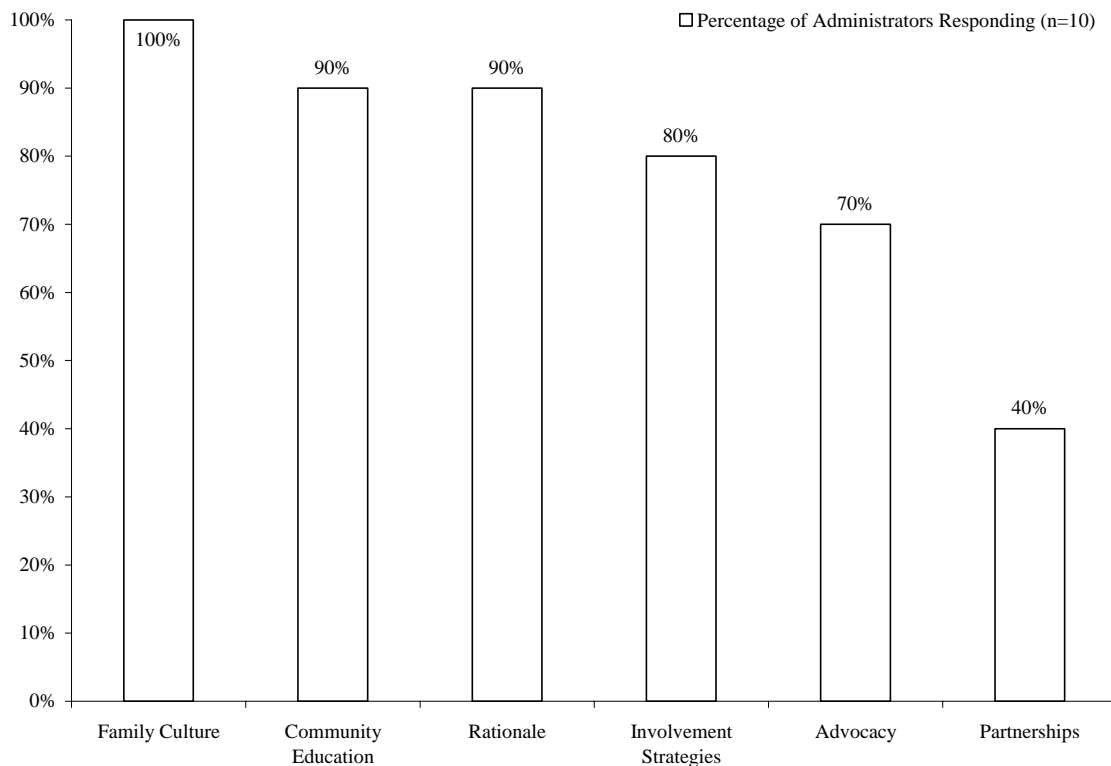


**Figure 11. Distribution of administrators who perceived a component of the parental and community involvement attribute.**

As shown in Figure 11, all of the administrators reported that it was essential to

examine what is actually known about culturally different families, their attitudes

regarding education, and how they support their children's education through the family

and their informal social networks. One of the administrator confirmations about family

culture included:

> Many of these parents have never been to school or school very infrequently. Regular attendance, continue to go on from one level to the next, reinforcing what they have learned, embracing English or understand it. Backing up the teachers role by making sure the child understands that school is number one, they work hard they are reinforced by doing that. This is critically important for parents.

On the other hand, one of the administrator concerns about family culture included:

> I am finding out that I need to do a lot more reaching out to the parents because our cultures are much different, especially in this mobile society and low-socioeconomic, I spend a lot of time talking about a great education; well, many of these parents themselves went to sixth, seventh or eighth grade and they are OK with it. I am hitting a brick wall because when I ask them for their help to help their children, they see them as more independent and doing their own things.

> Almost all of the administrators also mentioned the importance of working with

stakeholders to create community family centers that provide parental information, social

service referrals, lending libraries, meeting places, and translation services. One of the

administrator confirmations about community education included:

> We offer parent academy class at least once a month, sometimes twice a month. Our family specialist does those in both English and Spanish. I think that has been huge; it is highly attended by our parents. They are learning ways to help their child at home in terms of homework, training in math and reading strategies. We have had the public library come in. We have done the parent portal and other technology training. We also ask them what they want.

On the contrary, one of the administrator concerns about community education included,

"We have several families who are illiterate, so they cannot help them at home in any

language. I wish we could get more ESL training for these parents. I think if they spoke

more English they would feel more comfortable."

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Almost all of the administrators mentioned that when parents know the rationale and the critical components of the program, there is a greater likelihood that the elementary bilingual education program will be effective. One of the administrator confirmations about the level of parental awareness included, "I think you need to be able to communicate a very strong knowledge of the research, the purpose of bilingual education, and second language acquisition to parents so that they can join in." Conversely, one of the administrator concerns about the level of parental awareness included, "I think it is a shame when our parents come in and do not want their child to speak their native language; they only want them to apply the second language. I think that does a great disservice to the child and to the culture."

Most of the administrators agreed that it was important to incorporate effective strategies for overcoming common obstacles to involving parents and community members in the education of English Language Learners. One of the most prevalent issues was the recent expansion of the elementary bilingual education program. Some of the administrators shared confirmations about involvement strategies. One of the administrators mentioned, "I feel that community service should be closest to their home. Now that the English Language Learner population is growing. The cluster concept is growing archaic because we have so many." Another administrator commented, "You've got to be able to make decisions about bringing these students as close to home as possible so that we don't have a real disconnect and their community and their school." However, some of the administrators expressed concerns about involvement strategies.

One of the administrators mentioned:

> The bilingual program needs to benefit from the safety angle of continuity. This is my home, this is where I belong. You can find room anywhere but you give off the attitude that you are an inconvenience and you are just trying to play by the numbers and not by the spirit of the law. I think that is very important. Let's invest some time and resources into planning and so that we can find places and these people can feel like they have a home.

Another administrator commented:

> I feel that we make them feel as though they are not wanted in their neighborhood. What I mean is that if they don't speak the language then they have to go to another school.  And when they come over to the other school, it is no different really than their home school. That is the attitude that I get from parents. I will tell the parents that this is where their children are supposed to go to school and they will say that they are not wanted at the other school.

Many of the administrators mentioned that one of the attributes of an effective elementary bilingual education program was parents who were strong advocates of the program. This was the only component of the involvement attribute where there were no concerns. One of the administrator confirmations about advocacy included:

> I can say that some of the parents that I have met this year have been very vocal and that is different for me. That has been a real eye-opener for me. Parents are talking about discrimination in front of the news here.

Another administrator responded, "I love our bilingual parents. They are up here as soon as we ask them. They are extremely respectful. They understand the importance of education. They really want the best for their kids. We see that from our parents."

While the administrators shared a range of opinions regarding the components of the parental and community involvement attribute, the overall perception of this attribute was confirming. While the majority of the administrator perceptions of the rationale component were concerns (67%), at least half of the administrator perceptions of the rest

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of the components were confirmations. Figure 12 graphically presents the distribution of

coded administrator confirmations and concerns regarding the components of the parental

and community involvement attribute.
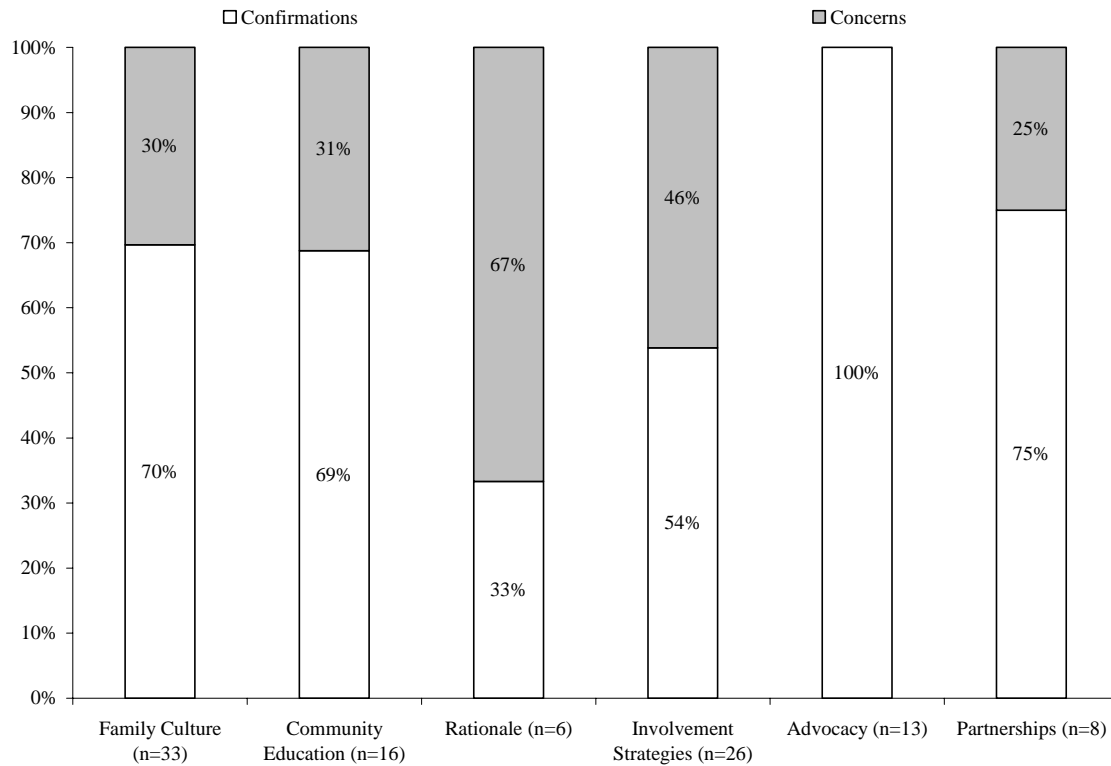


**Figure 12. Distribution of coded administrator confirmations and concerns regarding the components of the parental and community involvement attribute.**

*Administrator Perceptions of District, School, and Classroom Climate*

The administrators perceived district, school, and classroom climate as the third least prevalent attribute of an effective elementary bilingual education program. This attribute was comprised of nine components that were identified from previous research on effective bilingual education programs. These components included:

a) creating positive, safe, and orderly district, school, and classroom environments;
b) placing value on the linguistic and cultural background of students;
c) holding high expectations for the academic achievement of English Language Learners;
d) ensuring the integral involvement of English Language Learners in the overall school operation;
e) working within a guiding framework from which English Language Learners can reflect on individual and collective actions and beliefs;
f) providing students with equal access to a rigorous curriculum, accountability to the same academic standards, the opportunity to graduate from school in equal proportions, and the chance to leave school fully prepared to lead productive, successful, and fulfilling lives;
g) empowering all stakeholders to participate in, and take responsibility from, their own learning;
h) developing positive interpersonal and pedagogical relationships and valuing caring as a cognitive commitment; and
i) focusing on those who are generally the least successful, the most marginalized, and the most disadvantaged in our education system.

Almost all of the administrators (90%) perceived that placing value on the linguistic and cultural background of students was an important part of an effective elementary bilingual education program. Most of the administrators (80%) perceived that it was important to create district, school, and classroom environments that were positive, safe, and orderly. More than half of the administrators (60%) perceived the importance of English Language Learners being integrally involved in the overall school operation. Half of the administrators (50%) perceived that it was important to provide students with equal access to a rigorous curriculum, accountability to the same academic standards, the

opportunity to graduate from school in equal proportions, and the chance to leave school fully prepared to lead productive, successful, and fulfilling lives. Less than half of the administrators mentioned the remaining components. Figure 13 provides a graphical representation of the distribution of administrators who perceived a component of the district, school, and classroom climate attribute.
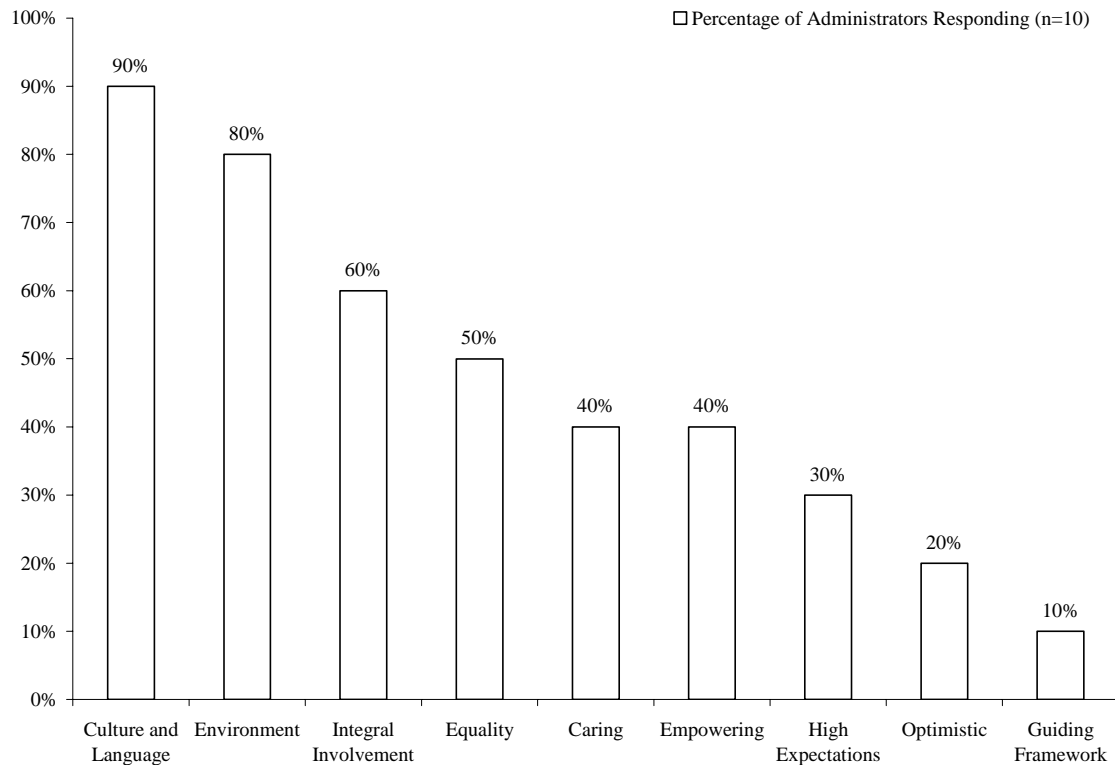


**Figure 13. Distribution of administrators who perceived a component of the district, school, and classroom climate attribute.**

As shown in Figure 13, almost all of the administrators mentioned that it was important for educators, students, parents, and community members to place value on the linguistic and cultural background of English Language Learners. Some of the administrators shared confirmations about the differences in importance placed on respect for language and culture.

One administrator mentioned:

> I feel that all children, no matter what their nationality or race, they all have to have that sense of pride, that sense of confidence of who they are and their background. Everyone needs to be treated with dignity and respect. So, we need to honor each and every child and parent and honor that heritage. We do that about learning as much as we can about traditions.

Another administrator commented:

> I would love to see Spanish a part of everyday conversation for the students and the staff. When you embrace that, you embrace the culture, the whole child, the heritage. Then you eliminate any discrimination or not feeling welcome. I think it is just as important for me to learn Spanish as for the kids to learn English.

On the other hand, some of the administrators shared concerns about the differences in importance placed on respect for language and culture. One administrator mentioned, "A negative attitude toward English Language Learners. A negative attitude toward the parents or community as a whole. These are the things that contribute the least to the success of English Language Learners." Another administrator commented, "Continually improving on understanding the cultures from which your students come from, although our principals do a very good job of that right now, that needs to continue."

Most of the administrators mentioned that the creation of a positive, safe, and orderly district, school, and classroom environment was a critical component of an effective elementary bilingual education program. Some of the administrators shared confirmations about the differences between the climates at different schools and levels within the organization.

One administrator mentioned:

> We started a new discipline program this year. The students have to turn in all their homework; they have to make good grades. So, the kids that would normally be in the office from office referrals because they couldn't care less about their homework, because no one at home could care less about it. They want to be in that soccer club. We have another group of teachers who started a dance club. So, it is the amazing energy.

Another administrator commented, "I believe that if people are in certain positions that they are there for a reason. So I see the glass is half-full, instead of half empty. I operate from positive presuppositions. I try to be positive." Conversely, some of the administrators expressed concerns about the differences between the climates at different schools and levels within the organization. One administrator commented, "If the teachers don't understand and don't have the consistency in classroom management. That is where I see problems." Another administrator responded, "For some of our ELL parents, the school is a bureaucracy. It is scary to come up to the school system."

More than half of the administrators said that it was important to ensure the integral involvement of English Language Learners in the overall school operation. One of the administrator confirmations about the differences in the level of integration between schools included:

> I think the biggest one is erasing those lines between bilingual and English. Trying to erase those lines has really helped a lot. We are just one campus. The beauty of our campus is that we are just like a little United Nations. It is not just Spanish, but we've got Somalians, Koreans, and Russians. We really are just like a little United Nations.

One of the administrator concerns about the differences in the level of integration

between schools included:

> I worry that the assessment center will become a pre-dumping ground. We need to have guidelines specifically tight because it can be an excuse for a child not to learn. I don't want that for those kids. It is tough for those kids coming in that don't speak English – especially those that don't speak Spanish.

The component of the climate attribute that was mentioned by half of the

administrators was equality. One of the administrator confirmations about the importance

of social justice included, "It does not matter where our children come from but what

they are going to leave us with." On the contrary, one of the administrator concerns about

social justice included:

> I do worry about a mindset, an attitude, a belief that these kids can be successful. I know that this mindset is in place already. When you are not familiar with that type of learner, I think there is hesitancy. When you are not familiar you want to say, "Oh, my, he speaks Farsi, he can't learn anything, he is so quiet he is not saying anything!" But that is how learners learn. I think as the vision becomes clear and the beliefs become clear and people begin to see what great kids they are, we will get over that. The initial will definitely be tough.

While the administrators shared a range of opinions regarding the components of

the district, school, and classroom climate attribute, the overall perception of this attribute

was confirming. While the majority of the administrator perceptions of the optimistic

component were concerns (75%), at least half of the administrator perceptions of the rest

of the components were confirmations. Figure 14 graphically presents the distribution of

coded administrator confirmations and concerns regarding the components of the district,

school, and classroom climate attribute.
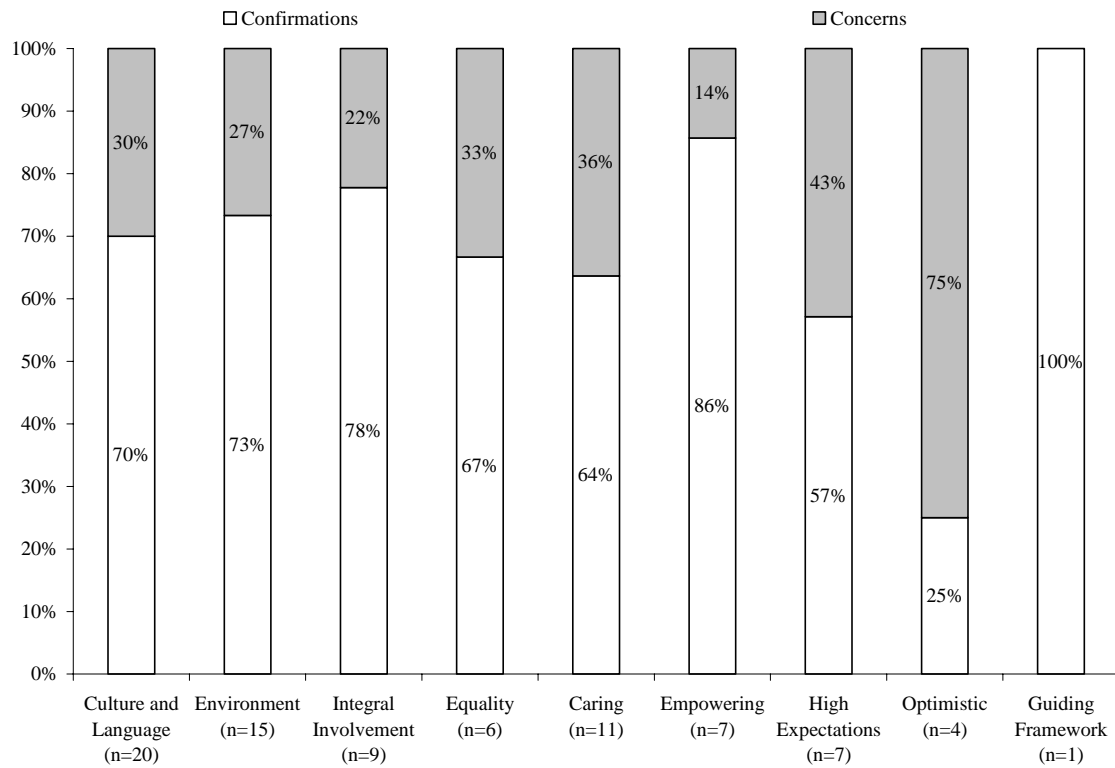
**Figure 14. Distribution of coded administrator confirmations and concerns regarding the components of the district, school, and classroom climate attribute.**

*Administrator Perceptions of Curriculum and Instruction*

The administrators perceived curriculum and instruction as the second least

prevalent attribute of an effective elementary bilingual education program. This attribute

was comprised of 11 components that were identified from previous research on effective

bilingual education programs. These components included:

a) emphasizing functional communication between teachers and students and among fellow students;
b) organizing the instruction of skills and academic content around thematic units;
c) promoting frequent student interaction through collaborative learning techniques;
d) supplementing explicit skills instruction with student-directed activities such as cooperative learning, partner reading, and collaborative inquiry;
e) promoting high expectations for all students;
f) creating active learning environments that are meaningful, technologically appropriate, and academically challenging;
g) using a variety of innovative instructional techniques that respond to different learning styles;
h) seeking an educationally productive balance between commonality and diversity in heterogeneous schools and classrooms;
i) promoting a philosophy of curriculum and instruction that capitalizes on the strengths of each child;
j) viewing cultural ways of learning as resources rather than deficits; and
k) making change a clearly defined, focused, and manageable process.

More than half of the administrators (60%) perceived that a philosophy of

curriculum and instruction that capitalizes on the strengths of each child is an important

part of an effective bilingual education program. Half of the administrators (50%)

perceived that it was important to promote high expectations for all students. Less than

half of the administrators mentioned the remaining components. While the collaborative

learning and balanced diversity components were identified as components of the

classroom attribute in the second chapter, none of the administrators in this study

perceived these to be components of an effective elementary bilingual education

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program. Figure 15 provides a graphical representation of the distribution of

administrators who perceived a component of the curriculum and instruction attribute.
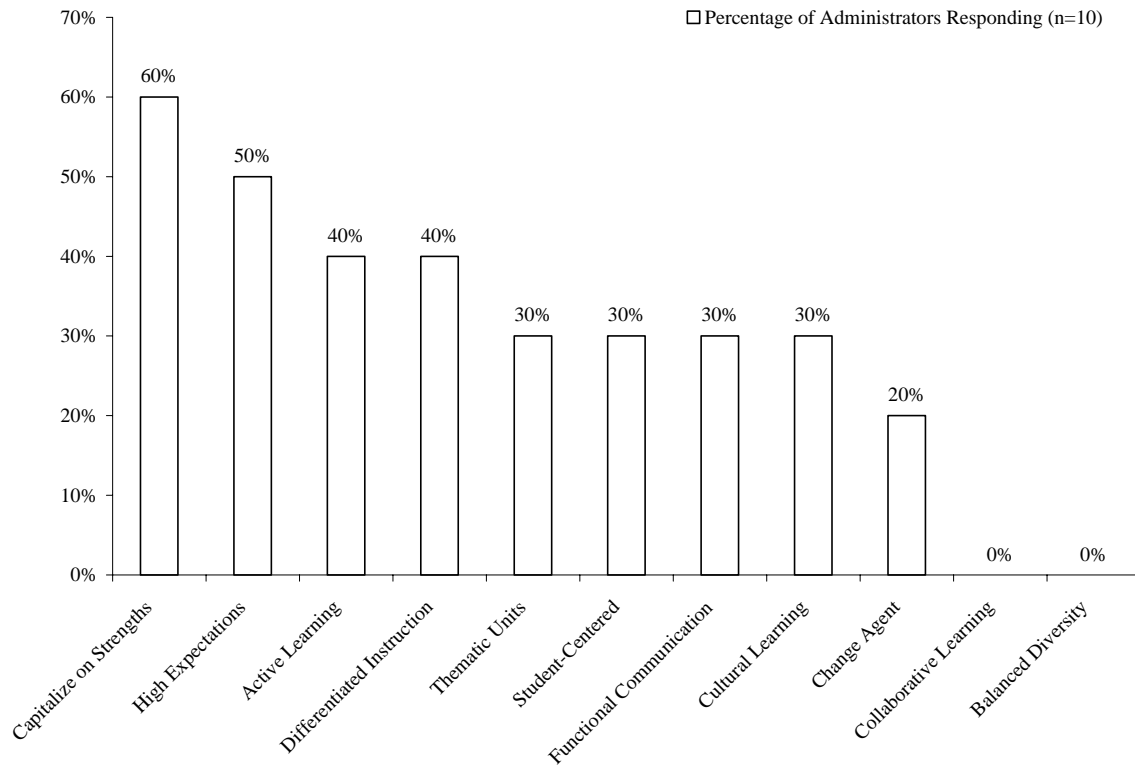


**Figure 15. Distribution of administrators who perceived a component of the curriculum and instruction attribute.**

As shown in Figure 15, more than half of the administrators suggested that a

philosophy of curriculum and instruction that capitalizes on the strengths of each child

promotes academic success for English Language Learners. One of the administrator

confirmations included, "Successful teachers understand what kids need and devise a

program to meet that the needs of the child."

On the other hand, one of the administrator concerns included:

> We cannot have the one slot that these kids fit in, they've got to be looked at individually. Teachers need to continue to reinvent the most effective and creative and lessons to deal with and provide these children, rather than going over and over the same stuff.

Half of the administrators mentioned the importance of promoting high expectations for all students. One of the administrator confirmations about the issue of communicating and upholding high expectations included:

> Effective teachers are incredibly compassionate, but are really committed to successful students. Their behaviors are not to leave them behind or forgive them or don't challenge them or whatever. They challenge their children but they are incredibly dedicated to them. That is important because they do forgive, relax, and give in to frustration. They are continually pushing the agenda. That is what makes them successful.

Conversely, one of the administrator concerns about the issue of communicating and upholding high expectations included:

> Our teachers love our kids and they don't want to see them struggle anymore than they have to. We have to constantly go back and say you must hold the standard here and they have to learn so much English. All I hear is that it is hard and it is hard. Low expectations…loving them too much can hurt them.

While the administrators shared a range of opinions regarding the components of the curriculum and instruction attribute, the overall perception of this attribute was confirming. While the majority of the administrator perceptions of the cultural learning (100%) and thematic units (75%) components were concerns, at least half of the administrator perceptions of the rest of the components were confirmations. Figure 16 graphically presents the distribution of coded administrator confirmations and concerns regarding the components of the curriculum and instruction attribute.

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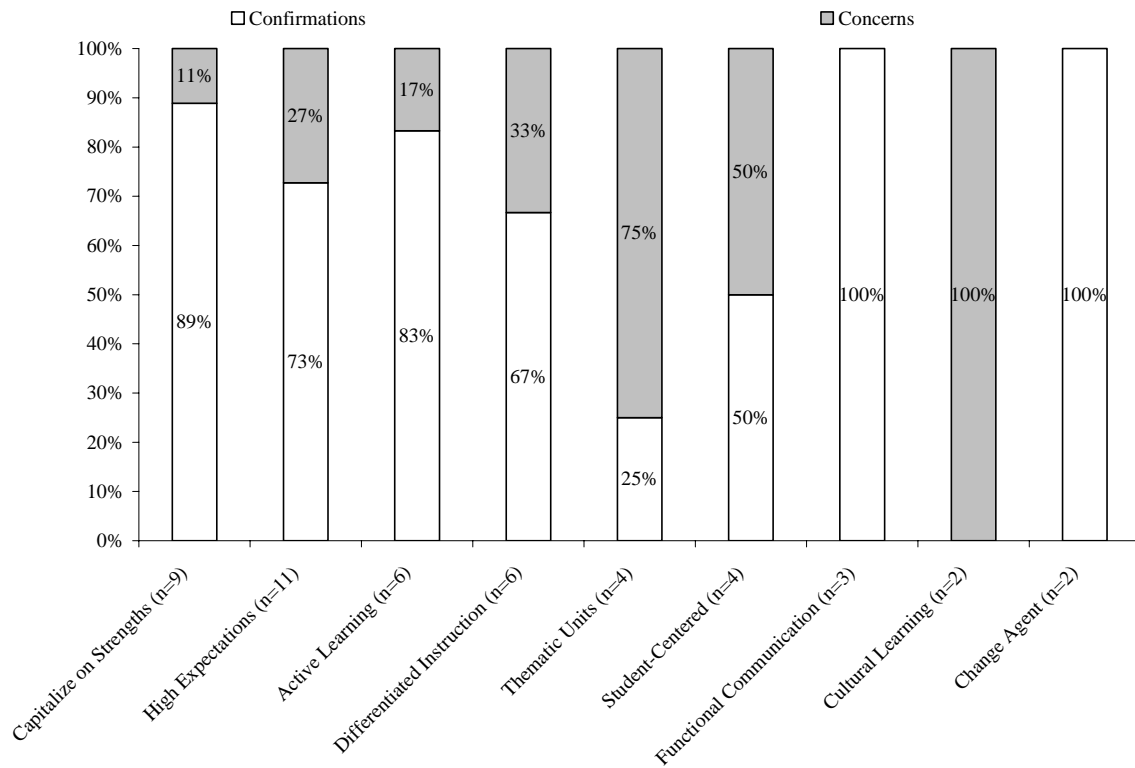
**Figure 16. Distribution of coded administrator confirmations and concerns regarding the components of the curriculum and instruction attribute.**

*Administrator Perceptions of Organization, Accountability, and Assessment*

The administrators perceived organization, accountability, and assessment as the least prevalent attribute of an effective elementary bilingual education program. This attribute was comprised of four components that were identified from previous research on effective bilingual education programs. These components included:

a) systematic assessment of student achievement informs ongoing efforts to improve academic success,
b) the elementary bilingual education program is an integral part of the district and campus academic plan and is widely respected by the administration,
c) there is strong accountability for the success of all students, and
d) data is used appropriately.

Most of the administrators (80%) perceived that strong accountability for the success of all students was important an important part of an effective elementary bilingual education program. Most of the administrators (80%) also perceived the importance of systematic assessment of student achievement that informs ongoing efforts to improve academic success. More than half of the administrators (60%) perceived that an effective elementary bilingual education program is an integral part of the district and campus academic plan and is widely respected by the administration. Half of the administrators (50%) perceived that the appropriate use of data was an important part of an effective elementary bilingual education program. Figure 17 provides a graphical representation of the distribution of administrators who perceived a component of the organization, accountability, and assessment attribute.

**Figure 17. Distribution of administrators who perceived a component of the organization, accountability, and assessment attribute.**

As shown in Figure 17, most administrators mentioned the importance of strong

accountability for the success of all students. One of the administrator confirmations

about levels of accountability between and within the schools and district included:

> At our campus, we believe that there is no difference when you make decisions for children; there is no difference between a monolingual student, a bilingual student, or an ESL student. We make the decisions consistently for all three groups. That is good for one group is good for the other. That consistency is really important, we only make decisions that will support all of the members on all of our campus. That includes special education as well.

Conversely, one of the administrator concerns about the levels of accountability between and within the schools and district included:

> Another thing is making excuses. For example, if they don't have something that they need like data. Instead of figuring out a way to handle it, they don't do it and make excuses. Instead of making excuses about, well the mom doesn't support, the mom doesn't come, then take charge and do something about the situation.

Most of the administrators reported that the use of systematic assessment of student achievement to inform ongoing efforts to improve academic success was important. One of the administrator confirmations about the role of assessment in the education of English Language Learners included:

> We have a really good handle; this year we have zoomed in our assessment practices to understand where our kids are academically and what to do to move them forward. That has dramatically changed this year.

On the other hand, one of the administrator concerns about the role of assessment in the education of English Language Learners included:

> What I believe forced us to the later transition was the testing. The anxiety of the students being expected to transition in one year and take a test. I am finding that I made a decision to keep a child in Spanish and that child has been in Spanish from Pre-K to 5th grade. That is wrong, that is systemically wrong.

More than half of the administrators reported that it was important for the elementary bilingual education program to be widely respected by the administration and an integral part of the district and campus academic plan.

One of the administrator confirmations about respect and integrity for the elementary

bilingual education program included:

> Rarely do the central office specialists come on campus anymore without being
> prepared for bilingual. They are always proactive in their thinking. The
> technology folks are wonderful. Just recognizing that there is a need for the
> materials. The awareness is now there at the central office level. We are now at
> the forefront of everybody's minds, whereas that was never the case before.

On the contrary, one of the administrator concerns about respect and integrity for the

elementary bilingual education program included:

> I think we need to continue to be automatic. All the instructional areas just need to
> be automatic. Whether it is funding or whatever, we shouldn't have to call up and
> say did you think about the English Language Learners?

> While debate continues over the use of standardized assessments to determine the

success of culturally and linguistically diverse students (Scheurich & Skrla, 2001;

Valencia et al., 2001), half of the administrators mentioned that the appropriate use of

data is a powerful tool in the assessment of the elementary bilingual education program.

There were no administrator concerns for this component. One of the administrator

confirmations included:

> I believe that the assessment center could provide us with the assessment data, but
> what really needs to happen is the assessment needs to occur there and the data
> has got to be reviewed at every individual campus. There are idiosyncrasies of
> how each kid tested. Each campus is going to have to take and look at it.

Another administrator commented:

> We will all sit down and go over all their scores. There is all the test data and we
> decide, based on the data that we do have, and observation, which children do we
> feel are ready to start moving into English.

> While the administrators shared a range of opinions regarding the components of

the organization, accountability, and assessment attribute, the overall perception of this

attribute was confirming. While the majority of the administrator perceptions of the integrity component were concerns (57%), the majority of the administrator perceptions of the rest of the components were confirmations. Figure 18 graphically presents the distribution of coded administrator confirmations and concerns regarding the components of the organization, accountability, and assessment attribute.
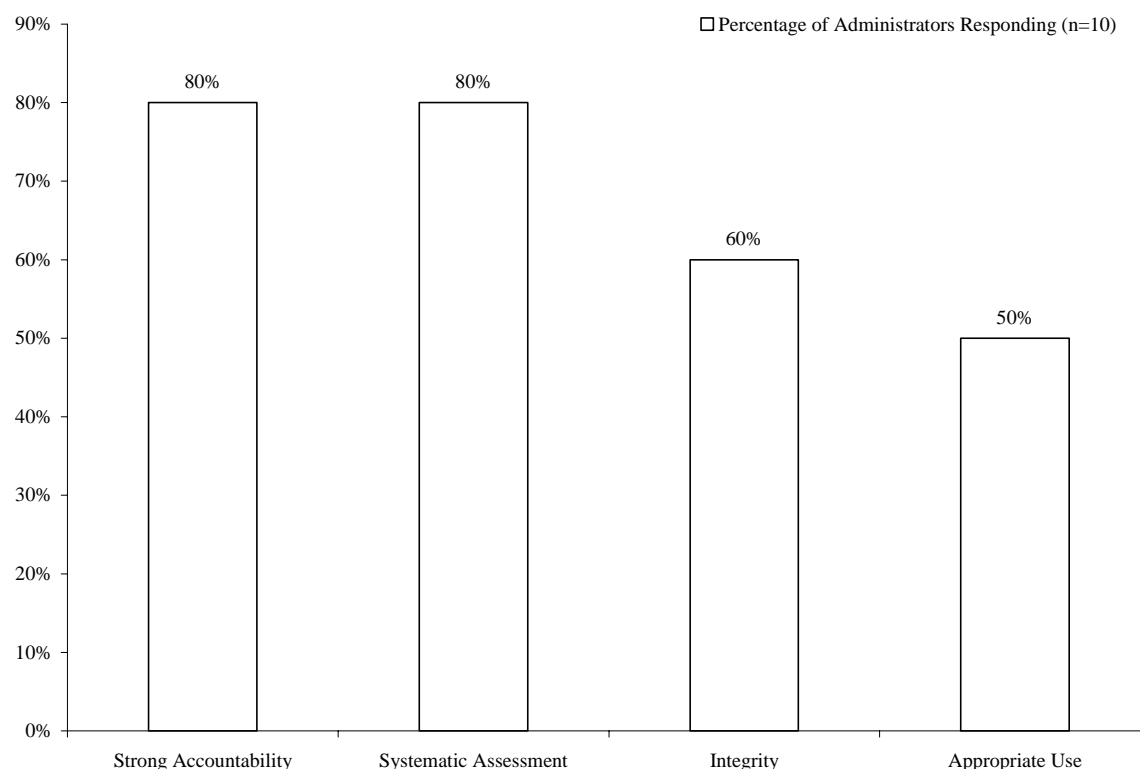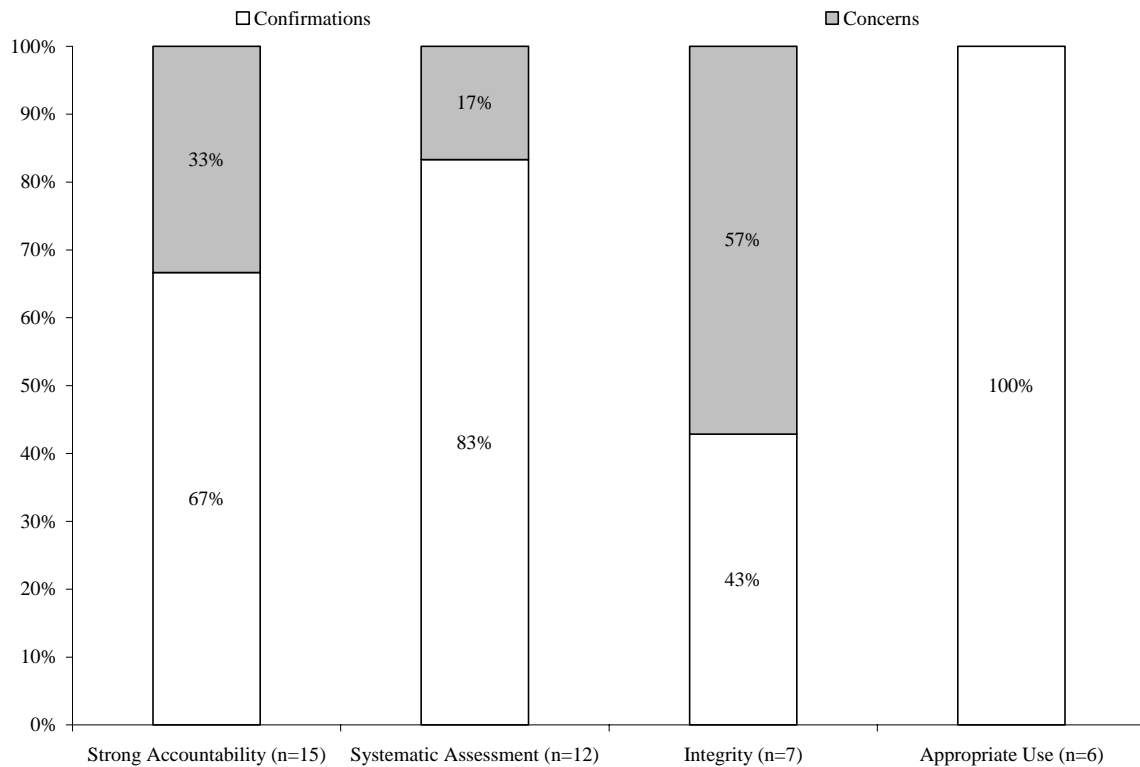


**Figure 18. Distribution of coded administrator confirmations and concerns regarding the components of the organization, accountability, and assessment attribute.**

*Teacher Perceptions*

Teachers who had been teaching in the district for at least the past three years in the elementary bilingual education program were invited to participate in this study. Eighteen teachers from six of the eight schools that had elementary bilingual education programs participated in the study. The teachers responded in writing to a series of survey questions regarding the perceived attributes of an effective elementary bilingual education program (Appendix C). The teacher responses were combined and coded by the researcher as they related to the components of the seven attributes of effective elementary bilingual education programs that have been identified in previous research on effective bilingual education programs. These seven attributes included: (a) leadership, vision, and goals; (b) district, school, and classroom climate; (c) program articulation; (d) organization, accountability, and assessment; (e) quality people; (f) parental and community involvement; and (g) curriculum and instruction. Additional codes were assigned to emergent themes that were not identified in the literature review. The additional themes that emerged from the teacher surveys included: (a) funding, (b) materials, (c) staffing, (d) class size, and (e) translation of materials.

The teachers perceived program articulation (20%) as the most prevalent attribute of an effective elementary bilingual education program. The teachers perceived parental and community involvement (15%) and curriculum and instruction (15%) as the second most prevalent attributes. Taken as a whole, the emergent themes (15%) were also perceived as the second most prevalent attribute by the teachers, followed by the quality people (13%), district, school, and classroom climate (11%), and leadership, vision, and

goals (8%) attributes. The teachers perceived organization, accountability, and assessment (3%) as the least prevalent attribute of an effective elementary bilingual education program. Figure 19 provides a graphical representation of the overall distribution of the coded teacher responses to the perceived attributes and emergent themes.



n=566
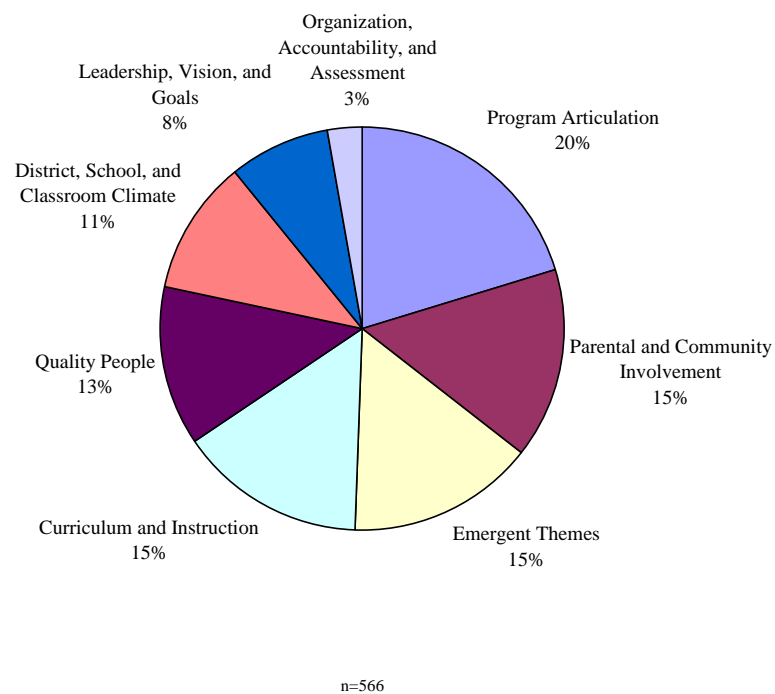
**Figure 19. Overall distribution of coded teacher responses to the perceived attributes and emergent themes.**

Each coded teacher response was also labeled as a confirmation or a concern by the researcher. A response was labeled as a confirmation if the attribute or emergent theme was perceived as something that contributed to the success of English Language Learners. A response was labeled as a concern if the attribute or emergent theme was

perceived as something that was either not currently present or not working well in the classroom, school, or district.

The majority of the teacher responses regarding the perceived attributes and emergent themes were coded as confirmations. While the majority of teacher perceptions of the emergent themes (64%) and the organization, accountability, and assessment attribute (75%) were concerns, the majority of the teacher perceptions of the rest of the attributes were confirmations. Figure 20 graphically presents the overall distribution of coded teacher confirmations and concerns regarding the perceived attributes and emergent themes. The perceived attributes and emergent themes are presented in the order they were mentioned by the teachers.
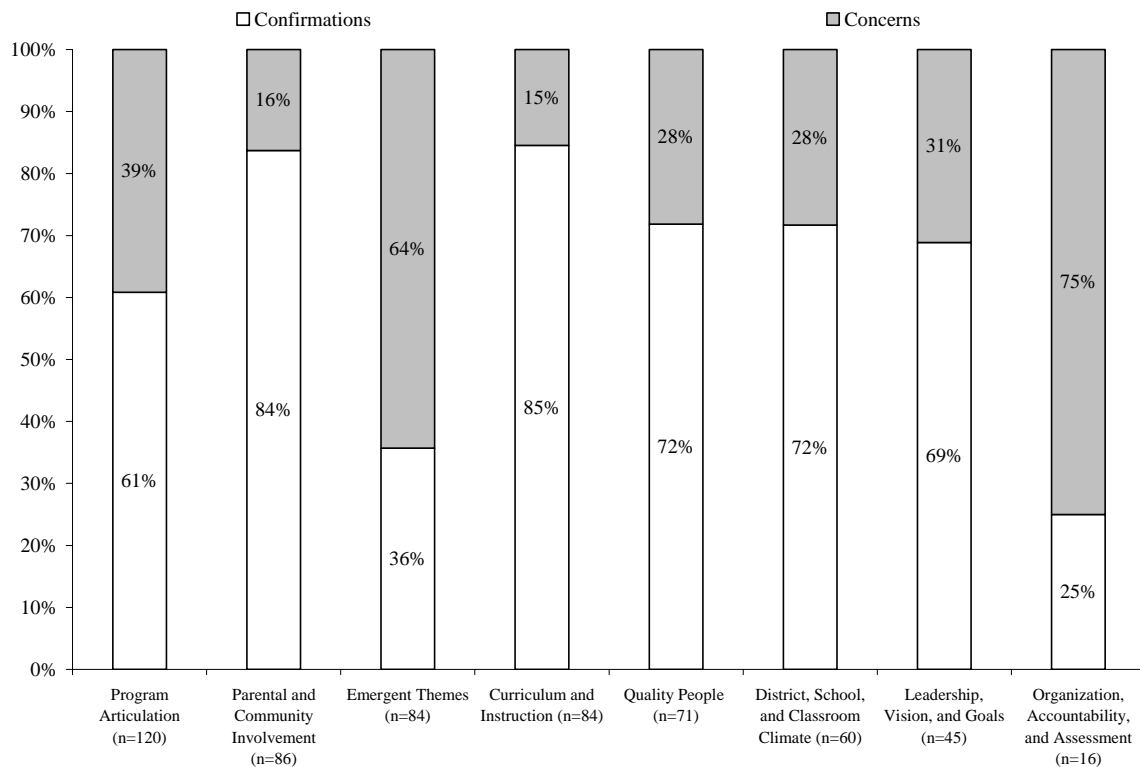


**Figure 20. Overall distribution of coded teacher confirmations and concerns regarding the perceived attributes and emergent themes.**

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The following narrative is a brief description of the teacher confirmations and concerns regarding the seven attributes.

As shown in Figure 20, more than half of the teachers shared a confirmation regarding program articulation. One teacher commented:

> We have come up with a curriculum that meets state requirements, district requirements and our school requirements, which has turned out to be a well-rounded and balanced curriculum. It meets the needs of our students and our own expectations are met as well.

On the other hand, a few of the teachers expressed a concern regarding program articulation. One teacher responded, "It takes 7 years for an ELL to become proficient, so why aim for proficiency in 3 to 4 years?"

Most of the teachers conveyed a confirmation regarding parental and community involvement. One teacher mentioned, "I find that the teacher/parent relationship is essential to be able to ensure that students achieve the maximum level of growth throughout the year. If there is a strained parent/teacher relationship, the student ultimately suffers." On the other hand, other teachers shared a concern regarding parental and community involvement. One teacher commented, "It would be great if all parents were fully involved in their child's academic success. However, too many factors sometimes make this impossible."

Most of the teachers also shared a confirmation regarding curriculum and instruction. One teacher commented:

> Children need to be mixed in academic, social, and linguistic abilities so that they will be successful. Languages should not be excluded, students can be role models and they can have role models because that is how life really is. We want to prepare our students for the real world and to be successful in it.

On the contrary, other teachers expressed a concern regarding curriculum and instruction. One teacher responded, "Poor modeling of the English language goes against student success."

Many of the teachers expressed a confirmation regarding quality people. One teacher responded, "I completed my master's degree in bilingual education last year thanks to a district grant and feel this significantly contributed to my understanding of language learners." On the contrary, some of the teachers conveyed a concern regarding quality people. One teacher mentioned, "For some strange reason, monolingual principals that evaluate bilingual teachers claim they understand what is being taught and actually give feedback."

Many of the teachers also shared a confirmation regarding district, school, and classroom climate. One teacher responded, "I think that by having things written in both Spanish and English central office shows that they give both languages importance and that they want the parents of English Language Learners to be informed and help their child academically." Conversely, some of the teachers conveyed a concern regarding district, school, and classroom climate. One teacher mentioned, "People may say they do consider the language or cultures, but actions speak louder and when programs are used and all avenues are not researched then we are really saying something different."

Many of the teachers conveyed a confirmation regarding leadership, vision, and goals. One teacher mentioned, "I think the principal makes or breaks any given program. The principal of a bilingual school should be bilingual and knowledgeable of the bilingual program." Conversely, other teachers shared a concern regarding leadership,

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vision, and goals. One teacher commented, "Our leadership needs to do what is right for students and not just do what will make the district look better on paper."

A few of the teachers conveyed a confirmation regarding organization, accountability, and assessment. One teacher mentioned, "On-going monitoring for the purpose of academic success is important." However, many of the teachers shared a concern regarding organization, accountability, and assessment. One teacher commented, "There seems to be no chance of the standardized testing people changing their ways of testing."

*Teacher Perceptions of Program Articulation*

The teachers perceived program articulation as the most prevalent attribute of an effective elementary bilingual education program. This attribute was comprised of six components that were identified from previous research on effective elementary bilingual education programs. These components included:

a) the development and maintenance of clearly articulated roles and responsibilities;
b) dynamic two-way communication;
c) focused and sustained supports between central office and school-level staff;
d) strong leadership, credibility, and respect;
e) a common program of instruction that is properly scoped, sequenced, and articulated across grade levels; and
f) a program of instruction that has been aligned with developmentally appropriate practices and student language proficiency levels in English and the students' first language.

Almost all of the teachers (89%) perceived that an effective program of instruction for English Language Learners must be aligned with developmentally appropriate practices and student language proficiency levels in English and the students' first language. Most of the teachers (78%) perceived that a common program of instruction that was properly scoped, sequenced, and articulated across grade levels was an important part of an effective elementary bilingual education program.

Half of the teachers (50%) perceived the importance of focused and sustained supports between central office and school-level staff. Less than half of the teachers (44%) perceived that it was essential to develop and provide strong leadership, credibility, and respect for the program. Less than half of the teachers (28%) also perceived that dynamic two-way communication was an important part of articulating the program. None of the teachers perceived the importance of the development and

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maintenance of clearly articulated roles and responsibilities. Figure 21 provides a

graphical representation of the distribution of teachers who perceived a component of the

program articulation attribute.
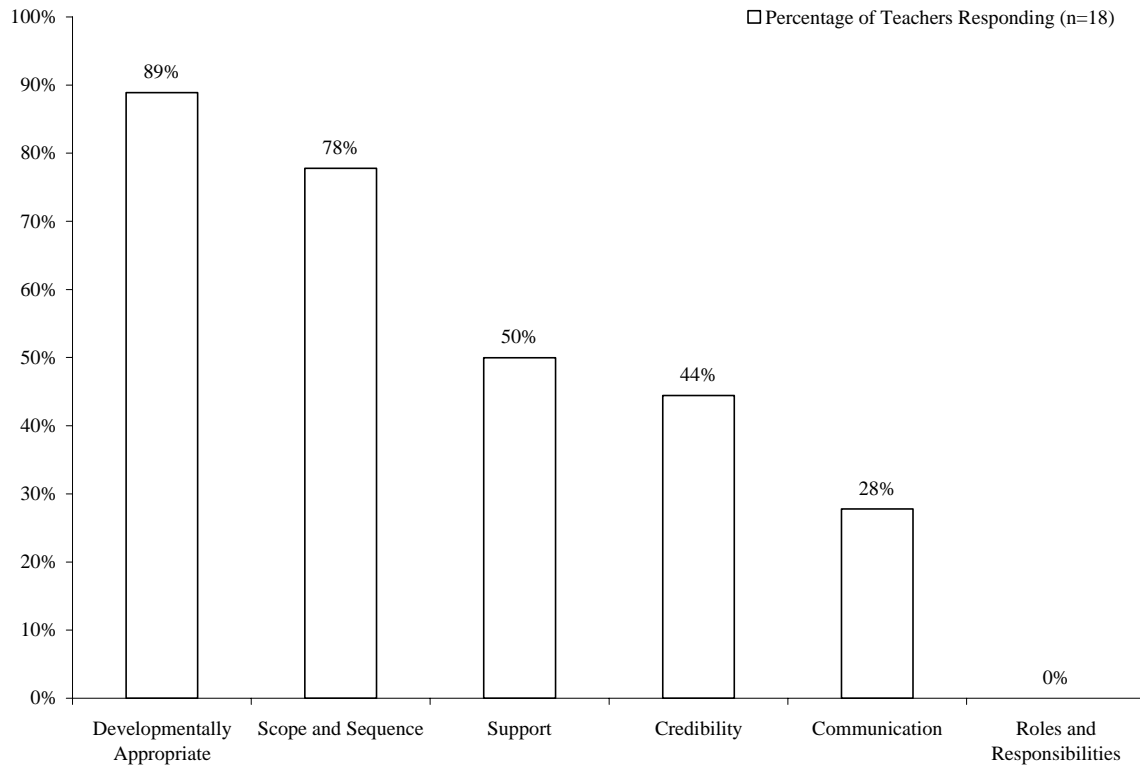


**Figure 21. Distribution of teachers who perceived a component of the program articulation attribute.**

As shown in Figure 21, almost all of the teachers mentioned that it was important

for an effective elementary bilingual education program to be aligned with

developmentally appropriate practices and student language proficiency levels in English

and the students' native languages. Some of the teachers shared confirmations about the

developmental appropriateness of the elementary bilingual education program.

One teacher mentioned:

> I feel that it is very important to maintain the primary language so that it can serve as a foundation for learning the second language. It is extremely important to me that the student becomes truly bilingual by being able to function in both languages when listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The ultimate goal is to teach the child English by building on Spanish, ensuring a bilingual child.

Another teacher commented:

> My views are that all of the students that have been in a consistent program will be successful. Development of a language begins with great understanding of their native language first, since this is what they are coming with to the school setting. We need to use those skills first, then move them to a new language. We just confuse them if we are trying to throw a new language at them.

On the other hand, some of the teachers expressed concerns about the developmental appropriateness of the elementary bilingual education program. One teacher mentioned:

> There are rumors that the bilingual department will administer a reading and writing test to first graders to see how much we have been working on English. This happens to be in direct contrast with the research found concerning bilingual students. They are supposed to learn to read and write well in their native language before being transitioned to reading and writing in English.

Another teacher commented, "More and more districts are pushing for early-exit or early-transition by third grade for English Language Learners. This truly has negative effects on the academic success on them."

Most of the teachers mentioned that it was important for an effective elementary bilingual education program to be properly scoped, sequenced, and articulated across grade levels. One of the teacher confirmations regarding the common program of instruction included, "One of the things that contribute the most to the academic success of English Language Learners is collaboration with Bilingual teachers within my grade

level and other grade levels." Conversely, one of the teacher concerns regarding the common program of instruction included:

> I feel that our program will improve if all the bilingual and ESL teachers in our campus were on the same page. We must all be carrying out the same type of instruction that reflects our model so that we can ensure the academic success of our English Language Learners.

Half of the teachers mentioned that it was important for an effective elementary bilingual education program to have focused and sustained supports between central office and school-level staff. Some of the teachers shared confirmations about the level of support. One teacher mentioned, "This year the Bilingual Department at Central Office has done more to help the teachers than they have any many years past." Another teacher commented, "This year especially we have had many dedicated excellent specialists from Central Office advising and working with the classroom teachers. They have really contributed to the academic success of our English Language Learners." On the contrary, some of the teachers expressed concerns about the level of support. One teacher mentioned, "When we have success, central office does not even acknowledge them as they would other things. We need more support from central office and they need to understand the program and that it is researched based." Another teacher commented, "I personally do not see very much support from the district's point of view. If there is an underlying effort, I have not observed one."

Less than half of the teachers mentioned that it was important to provide strong leadership, credibility, and respect in an effective elementary bilingual education program. Some of the teachers shared confirmations regarding the level of credibility and respect. One teacher mentioned, "Our principal is knowledgeable about best teaching

practices and makes every effort to support teachers to attaining the latest information and professional development to implement such practices in the classroom." Another teacher commented, "Our principal has faith in the professionalism of her teachers and that they can do what they know is based on research and best for English Language Learners." However, some of the teachers expressed concerns regarding the level of credibility and respect. One of the teachers mentioned:

> As of today (more than half-way through the school year), I have never had a principal or assistant principal come into my room with the purpose of seeing what I am teaching. I believe that speaks volumes to why our campus is one of the lowest in the district.

Another teacher commented, "I feel our principal is TOO worried about what Central Office will think of her school. Because of that she makes us attend too many meetings and trainings and as a result morale is down."

Some of the teachers mentioned that it was important to have dynamic, two-way communication in an effective elementary bilingual education program. One of the teacher confirmations regarding communication included, "Our principal takes our opinion and teacher judgment into account when making case-by-case decisions for our English Language Learners." In contrast, one of the teacher concerns regarding communication included:

> If principals, parents, and teachers are speaking out about certain issues, the people at central office need to be willing to listen to these issues that are affecting us. Since we are the ones in the trenches day to day, we use are voice to speak up for what we feel needs to change or get better. These things need to be taken into account.

While the teachers shared a range of opinions regarding the components of the program articulation attribute, the overall perception of this attribute was confirming. For

instance, the teachers perceived communication (67%) as the most confirming component and credibility (55%) as the least confirming component. Figure 22 graphically presents the distribution of coded teacher confirmations and concerns regarding the components of the program articulation attribute.
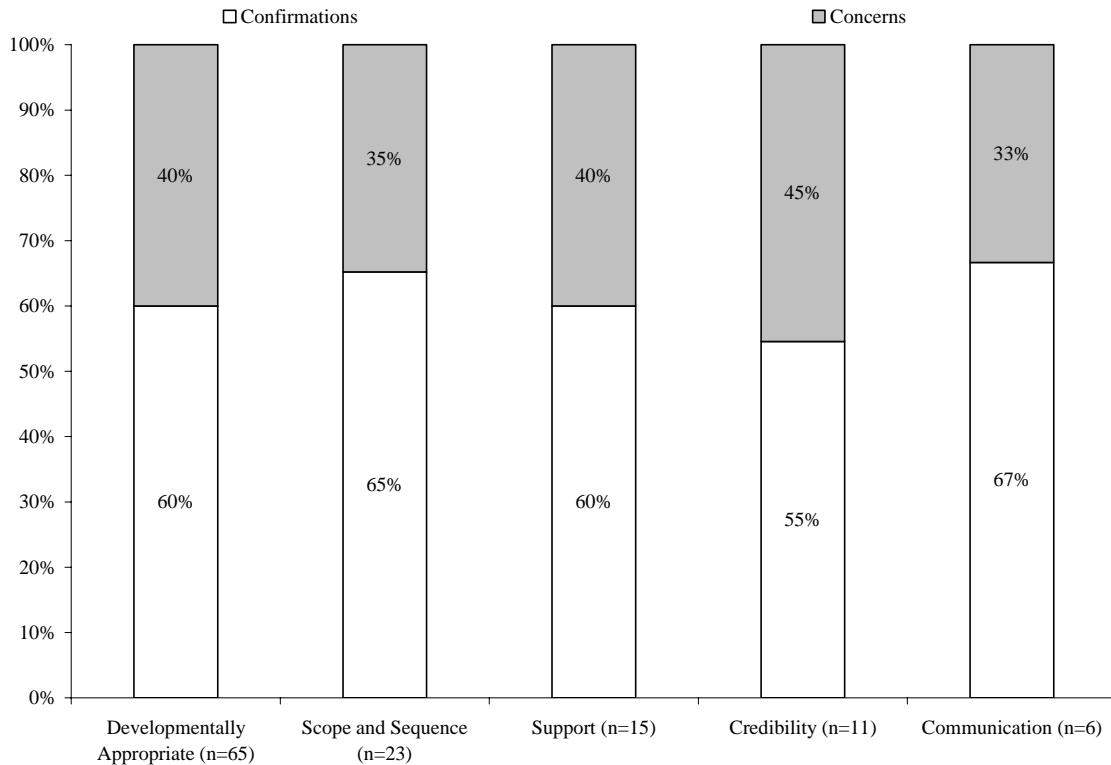


**Figure 22. Distribution of coded teacher confirmations and concerns regarding the components of the program articulation attribute.**

*Teacher Perceptions of Curriculum and Instruction*

The teachers perceived curriculum and instruction, along with parental and

community involvement attribute and the emergent themes, as the second most prevalent

attribute of an effective elementary bilingual education program. This attribute was

comprised of 11 components that were identified from previous research on effective

elementary bilingual education programs. These components included:

a) emphasizing functional communication between teachers and students and among
   fellow students;
b) organizing the instruction of skills and academic content around thematic units;
c) promoting frequent student interaction through collaborative learning techniques;
d) supplementing explicit skills instruction with student-directed activities such as
   cooperative learning, partner reading, and collaborative inquiry;
e) promoting high expectations for all students;
f) creating active learning environments that are meaningful, technologically
   appropriate, and academically challenging;
g) using a variety of innovative instructional techniques that respond to different
   learning styles;
h) seeking an educationally productive balance between commonality and diversity
   in heterogeneous schools and classrooms;
i) promoting a philosophy of curriculum and instruction that capitalizes on the
   strengths of each child;
j) viewing cultural ways of learning as resources rather than deficits; and
k) making change a clearly defined, focused, and manageable process.

Many of the teachers (67%) perceived that supplementing explicit skills

instruction with student-directed activities such as cooperative learning, partner reading,

and collaborative inquiry was an important part of an effective program of instruction for

English Language Learners. More than half of the teachers (61%) perceived that using a

variety of innovative instructional techniques that respond to different learning styles was

important. More than half of the teachers (61%) also perceived the importance of active

learning environments that were meaningful, technologically appropriate, and academically challenging.

One third of the teachers (33%) perceived that the viewing of cultural ways of learning as resources rather than deficits was important. One third of the teachers (33%) also perceived the importance of putting an emphasis on functional communication between teachers and students and among fellow students. Less than one third of the teachers (22%) perceived that the instruction of skills and academic content organized around thematic units was important. Less than one third of the teachers (22%) also perceived the importance of promoting a philosophy of curriculum and instruction that capitalizes on the strengths of each child. Very few teachers mentioned the high expectations and balanced diversity components. None of the teachers mentioned the change agent component. Figure 23 provides a graphical representation of the distribution of teachers who perceived a component of the curriculum and instruction attribute.

70%  ☐ Percentage of Teachers Responding (n=18)

67%
61%
56%
33% 33%
22% 22%
17%
11% 11%
0%

Student-Centered
Differentiated Instruction
Active Learning
Cultural Learning
Functional Communication
Thematic Units
Collaborative Learning
Capitalize on Strengths
High Expectations
Balanced Diversity
Change Agent
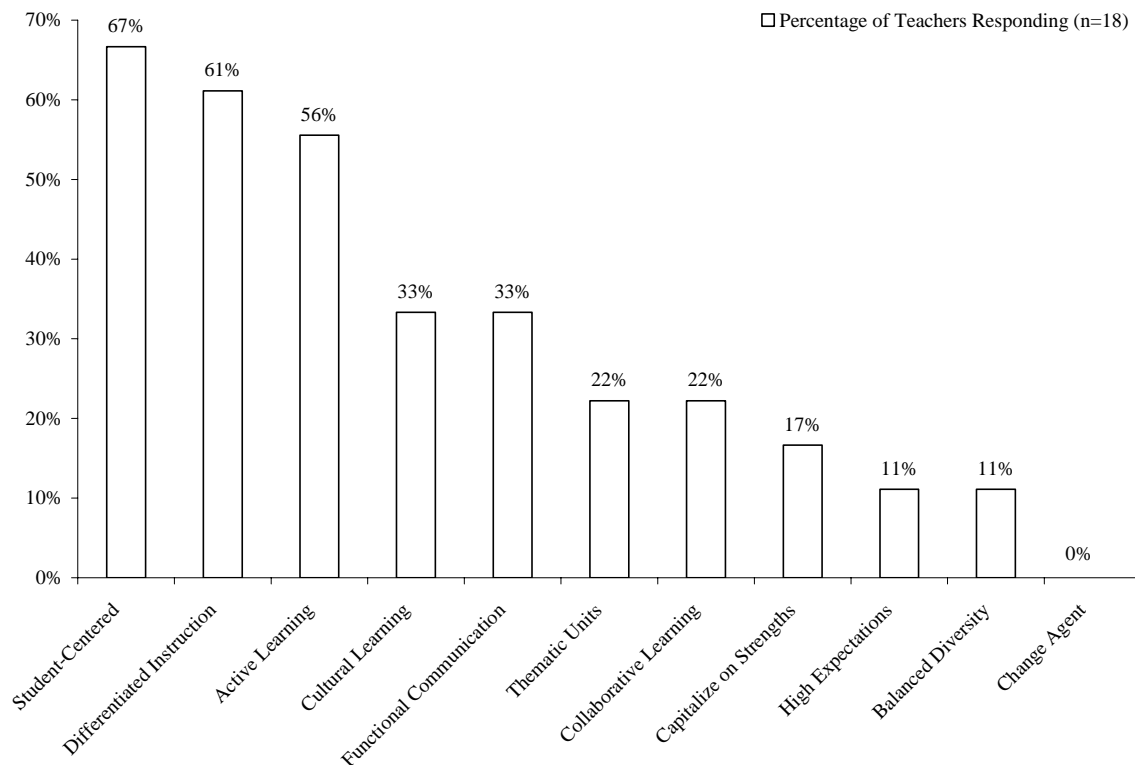
**Figure 23. Distribution of teachers who perceived a component of the curriculum and instruction attribute.**

As shown in Figure 23, many of the teachers mentioned that supplementation of

explicit skills instruction with student-centered activities such as cooperative learning,

partner reading, and collaborative inquiry was a component of an effective elementary

bilingual education program. None of the teacher perceptions of student-centered

instruction were concerns. One of the teacher confirmations included, "Cooperative

learning, peer-teaching, large group instruction, and small group instruction contribute to

the academic success of English Language Learners." Another teacher commented,

"Some of the strategies I use to ensure success for my English Language Learners include

modeling, small groups, whole group, read alouds, and conferencing."

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Many of the teachers also mentioned that using a variety of innovative instructional techniques that respond to different learning styles was a component of an effective elementary bilingual education program. None of the teacher perceptions of differentiated instruction were concerns. One of the teacher confirmations included, "I use many visuals and hands on activities, lots of songs, poems, and rhymes that the children enjoy." Another teacher mentioned, "I contribute to the academic success of my English Language Learners by using a differentiated teaching approach. I must find a way to meet the needs of all students."

More than half of the teachers mentioned that active learning environments that are meaningful, technologically appropriate, and academically challenging were a component of an effective elementary bilingual education program. One of the teacher confirmations about active learning included:

> Things that contribute to the success of English Language Learners include using a lot of hands on experiences, manipulatives, and visuals. Making it fun for them. They need to feel they are "playing" games when in reality they are learning. They need to be excited about their learning.

On the other hand, one of the teacher concerns about active learning included, "Things that contribute the least to the success of English Language Learners are repetition, memorization, and worksheets."

Some of the teachers promoted a philosophy of curriculum and instruction that capitalizes on the strengths of each child. One of the teacher confirmations included, "Spend time planning to how to motivate the students by building on what they already know and then connect it with what it to be learned." One of the teacher concerns included, "Many of our students come to school with something that their peers don't

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have; they speak a language other than English. The sad fact is that in the United States

this is not seen as a gift but as a deficit."

Some of the teachers also emphasized functional communication between

teachers and students and among fellow students. One of the teacher confirmations about

functional communication included:

> I really think the Dual Language program helps our English Language Learners because they pick up more English when they have positive role models in those classrooms. Not only is the teacher not the only source of information for both languages, students can shine in both languages and help each other out whenever English or Spanish is being used.

Conversely, one of the teacher concerns about functional communication included:

> The English Language Learners in my class have the advantage of learning English from their peers in a non-threatening way. This seems to be in direct contrast to the students that are currently in the regular bilingual classrooms where the only language model in the class is the teacher.

A few of the teachers mentioned the organization of the instruction of basic skills

and academic content around thematic units as a component of an effective elementary

bilingual education program. One of the teacher confirmations about thematic units

included, "I integrate as much content as possible to ensure the academic success of my

English Language Learners." On the contrary, one of the teacher concerns about thematic

units included:

> Our principal does not understand the idea of thematic units and how students are immersed in the idea for a week or two so that they can read about the topic or idea, write about the idea, touch, and experiment with the idea.

A few of the teachers also promoted frequent student interaction through

collaborative learning techniques. There were no teacher concerns about collaborative

learning. One of the teacher confirmations included, "The student and the teacher learn

together through constructivist learning and inquiry." Another teacher commented,

"Academic success is achieved in cooperative groups in the classroom by allowing the

students to work and learn together by mixing abilities and language proficiencies."

While the teachers shared a range of opinions regarding the components of the

curriculum and instruction attribute, the overall perception of this attribute was

confirming. While the majority of the teacher perceptions regarding the capitalize on

strengths component were concerns (57%), the majority of the teacher perceptions of the

rest of the components were confirmations. Figure 24 graphically presents the

distribution of coded teacher confirmations and concerns regarding the components of the

curriculum and instruction attribute.
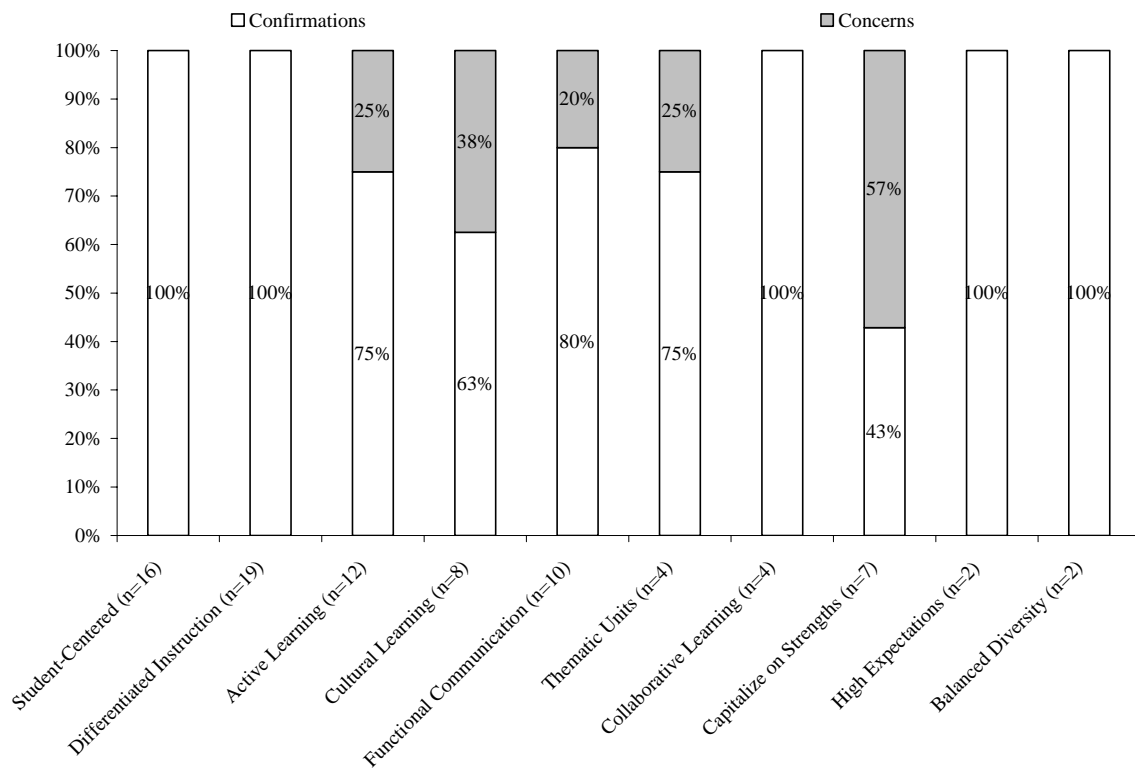
**Figure 24. Distribution of coded teacher confirmations and concerns regarding the components of the curriculum and instruction attribute.**

*Teacher Perceptions of Parental and Community Involvement*

The teachers perceived parental and community involvement, along with curriculum and instruction and the emergent themes, as the second most prevalent attribute of an effective elementary bilingual education program. This attribute was comprised of six components that were identified from previous research on effective elementary bilingual education programs. These components included:

a) all parents know the rationale and the critical components of the program;
b) parents and community establish partnerships with schools, extend learning into the home, and reinforce academic values outside school;
c) all parents are strong advocates of the program;
d) stakeholders implement effective strategies for overcoming common obstacles to involving parents and community members in the education of English Language Learners;
e) educators carefully examine what is actually known about culturally different families, their attitudes regarding education, and how they support their children's education through the family and their informal social networks; and
f) community family centers provide parental information, social service referrals, lending libraries, meeting places, and translation services.

Most of the teachers (78%) perceived that the establishment of parent and community partnerships with schools, the extension of learning into the home, and the reinforcement of academic values outside school are parts of an effective elementary bilingual education program. Most of the teachers (78%) also perceived that it was important to carefully examine what is actually known about culturally different families, their attitudes regarding education, and how they support their children's education through the family and their informal social networks.

More than half of the teachers (56%) perceived that community family centers that provided parental information, social service referrals, lending libraries, meeting places, and translation services were important. Less than one third of the teachers (28%)

perceived that it was essential to develop effective strategies for overcoming common obstacles to involving parents and community members in the education of English Language Learners. Less than one third of the teachers (22%) also perceived that it was important that all parents were strong advocates of the program. Only a few of the teachers (17%) perceived that it was important that all parents knew the rationale and the critical components of the program. Figure 25 provides a graphical representation of the distribution of teachers who perceived a component of the parental and community involvement attribute.
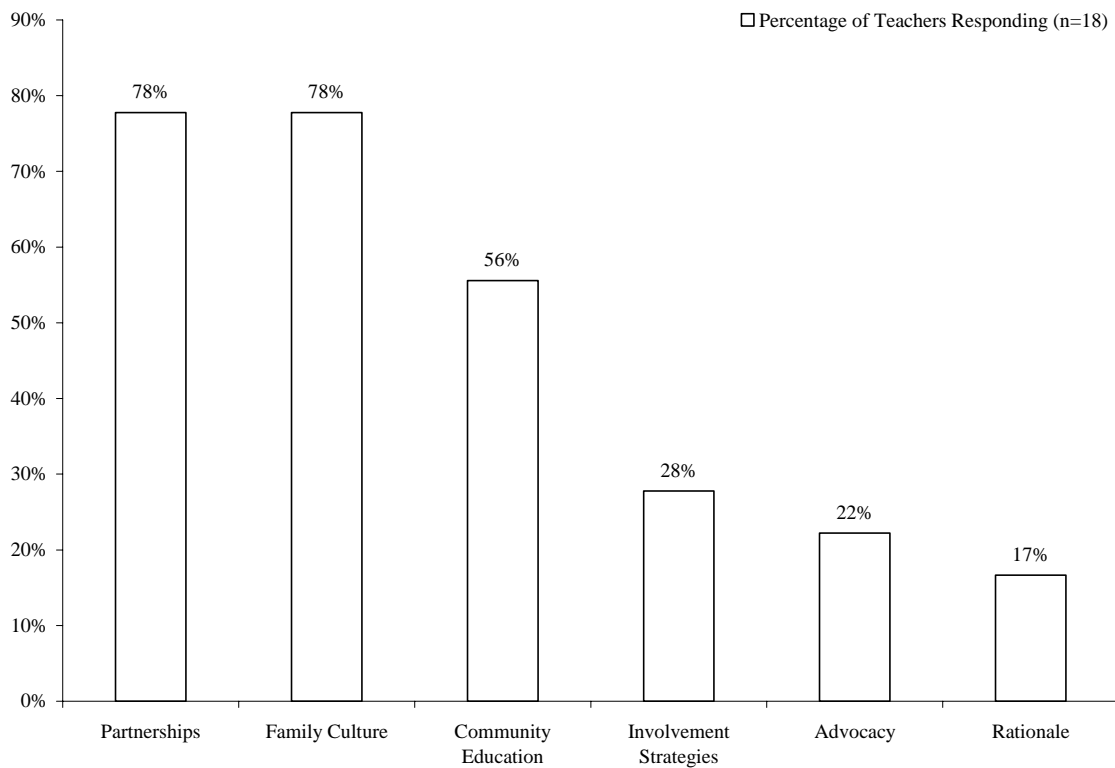


**Figure 25. Distribution of teachers who perceived a component of the parental and community involvement attribute.**

As shown in Figure 25, most of the teachers mentioned that when parents and community establish partnerships with schools, they extend learning into the home and reinforce academic values outside school. One of the teacher confirmations included:

> Parents need to reach out to teachers as much as teachers need to reach out to them. There must be no existing gaps between parents and teachers. Both need to meet students' needs at school and at home. Parents need to be more aware of what is going on in the school environment as well as what is being taught. This way, parents can enhance and reinforce these issues and concepts.

Another teacher mentioned, "Parents who work collaboratively with their child's teacher to meet the child's academic and social needs contribute to the academic success of English Language Learners."

Most of the teachers also mentioned that it was important for educators to examine what is actually known about culturally different families, their attitudes regarding education, and how they support their children's education through the family and their informal social networks. One of the teacher confirmations about family culture included:

> Our parents contribute by placing a lot of attention on education. Many have not had the privilege of going to school through high school, but they send their children to school almost everyday. There is low absenteeism. They send them to school clean, rested, well fed, loved and ready to learn, even though many of the parents are functional illiterates. So many of the parents have risked so much and worked so hard to be in this country; they often inspire their children with their stories. Most of the students come from large extended families, who take interest in the student's learning. Perhaps some would say that some parents do not help in the ways middle class parents would, but they help in the way they know how.

On the other hand, one of the teacher concerns about family culture included, "Most of the parents of the students I teach need to become more actively involved in their

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children's education by attending parent-teacher conferences and meetings, joining the

PTA, and visiting the classroom."

More than half of the teachers mentioned that it was important to have community

family centers that provide parental information, social service referrals, lending libraries,

meeting places, and translation services. Some of the teachers shared confirmations about

community education. One teacher mentioned:

> I have parents in my classroom that are taking English courses themselves to learn
> to speak English. I think that this shows their children how important it is to learn
> English. By keeping them motivated and setting high expectations for their
> children. They need to truly believe that their children will be successful in
> whatever they decide to do.

Another teacher commented, "Parents of most of our English Language Learners work

two jobs, and have less than a sixth grade education. Our school offers opportunities to

get their GED, learn English, and computer classes. Parenting classes are a great hit."

Conversely, some of the teachers expressed concerns about community education. One

teacher mentioned, "Unfortunately, a lot of my parents are not educated people, many of

them are illegal immigrants, work two jobs and they simply do not help their children."

Another teacher commented, "Parents who are illiterate and not willing to change

themselves cause many of the difficulties. We have many of those cases."

A few of the teachers mentioned that it was important to incorporate effective

strategies for overcoming common obstacles to involving parents and community

members in the education of English Language Learners. One of the teacher

confirmations about involvement strategies included, "Last year, I was selected to

participate in the AYP committee and they did open five more bilingual schools."

On the contrary, one of the teacher concerns about involvement strategies included:

> Our principal needs to figure out a way to get the parents involved in the school. She needs to promote more activities geared toward the Hispanic community. All of the PTA members are monolingual and bilingual parents do not get involved. Out of all the PTA programs held through out the year only one is for the Hispanic community, Cinco de Mayo.

While the teachers shared a range of opinions regarding the components of the parental and community involvement attribute, the overall perception of this attribute was confirming. While the majority of teacher perceptions of the rationale component were concerns (75%), the majority of the teacher perceptions of the rest of the components were confirmations. Figure 26 graphically presents the distribution of coded teacher confirmations and concerns regarding the components of the parental and community involvement attribute.
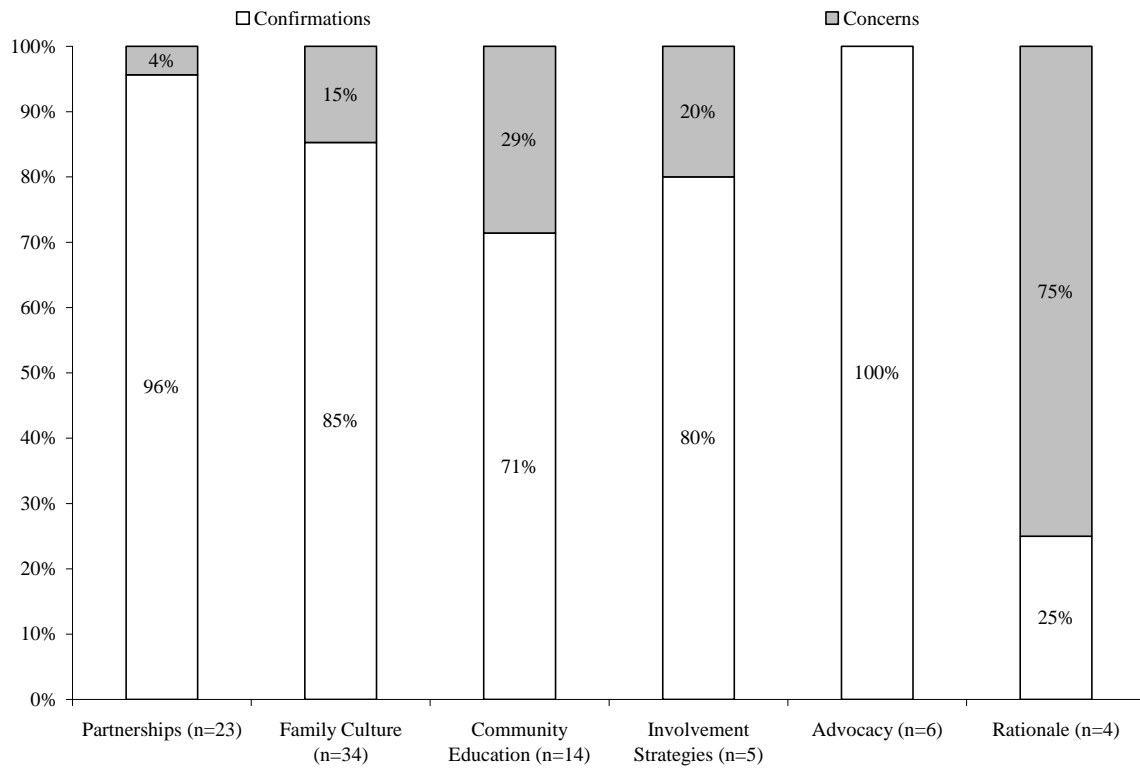
**Figure 26. Distribution of coded teacher confirmations and concerns regarding the components of the parental and community involvement attribute.**

*Teacher Perceptions of Emergent Themes*

Taken as a whole, the teachers perceived the emergent themes, along with

curriculum and instruction and parental and community involvement, as the second most

prevalent attribute of an effective elementary bilingual education program. This attribute

was composed of five themes that emerged from the teacher surveys. These emergent

themes included:

a) funding,
b) materials,
c) staffing,
d) class size, and
e) translation of materials.

Almost all of the teachers (89%) perceived that materials were an important part

of an effective elementary bilingual education program. More than half of the teachers

(56%) perceived that staffing was also important. Less than half of the teachers (44%)

perceived that the translation of materials was an important factor. Less than one third of

the teachers (22%) perceived that funding was important. Only a few of the teachers

(17%) perceived that class size was an important part of an effective elementary bilingual

education program. Figure 27 provides a graphical representation of the distribution of

teachers who perceived an emergent theme.
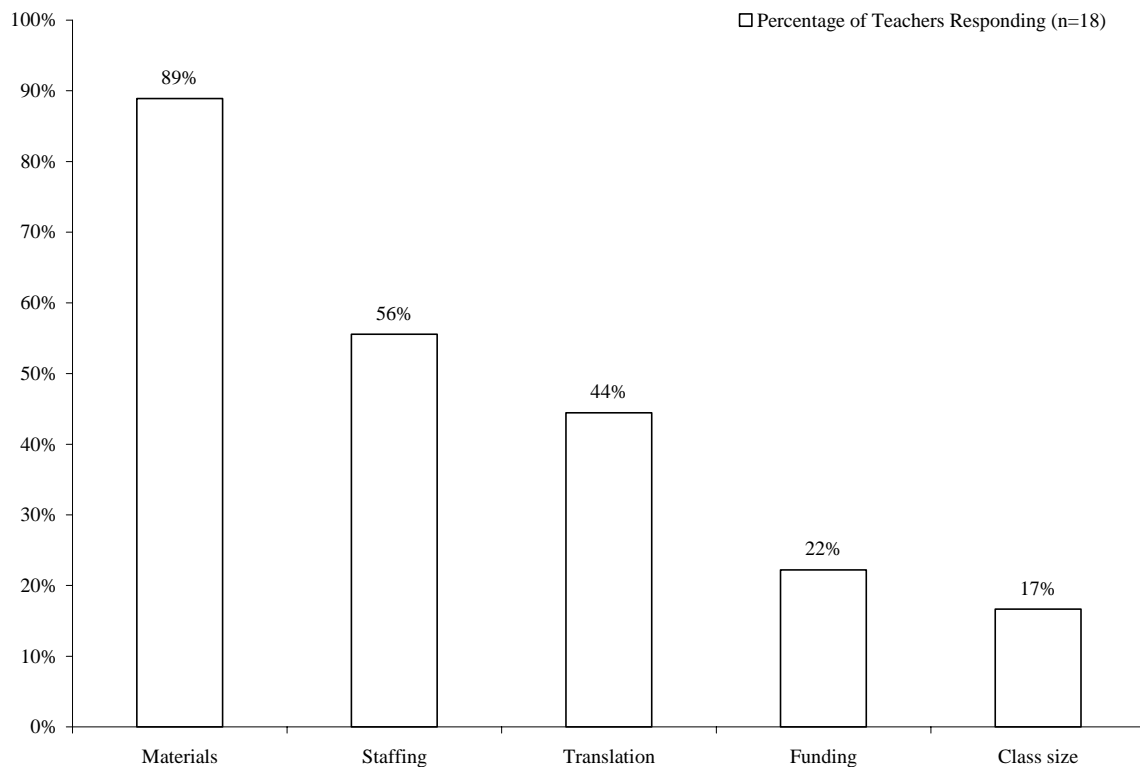
**Figure 27. Distribution of teachers who perceived an emergent theme.**

As shown in Figure 27, many of the teachers mentioned the importance of the

alignment and timing of resources, the quantity and quality of equipment and materials,

and the allocation of staff. One of the teacher confirmations included, "Our principal is

always willing to spend the monies available to properly equip our bilingual program."

Another teacher mentioned, "Our principal is very good about trying to provide us the

materials we need for our students. She has always been supportive in that way." A third

teacher responded, "I have also seen central office hire more staff that is able to assist

bilingual teachers with curriculum and instruction." On the other hand, one of the teacher

concerns about money, materials, and allocations of personnel included, "The budget

allocated for the English Language Learners needs to be spent on buying materials or

conferences or other things that will benefit the students because it isn't as equitable as it should be." Another teacher commented, "Not having sufficient academic research based material. Not having the same quality and quantity of resources as monolingual teachers and students have." A third teacher mentioned, "Available funds allocated for the assistants we were promised when we were hired. If we have an assistant, we have the time to translate the materials appropriate. Without them, it is not possible to do it all."

Less than half of the teachers addressed the translation of materials for teacher, student, and parent use. One of the teacher concerns included:

> Although there is a lot of training out there, it is aimed for the English student. Trainings that are offered on Saturdays are great. The only problem is that most of the material provided is in English and that means I have to translate or cut and paste.

Another teacher commented:

> They send teachers to district mandated trainings but no materials in Spanish are provided to implement the training. They need to provide us with the materials necessary to be successful and not give us another hurdle to jump by having to translate it.

While the teachers shared a range of opinions regarding the emergent themes, the overall perception of the emergent themes was concerning. For instance, the teacher perceptions of class size (80%) was the most concerning theme and the teacher perceptions of materials (59%) was the least concerning theme. Figure 28 graphically presents the distribution of coded teacher confirmations and concerns regarding the emergent themes.
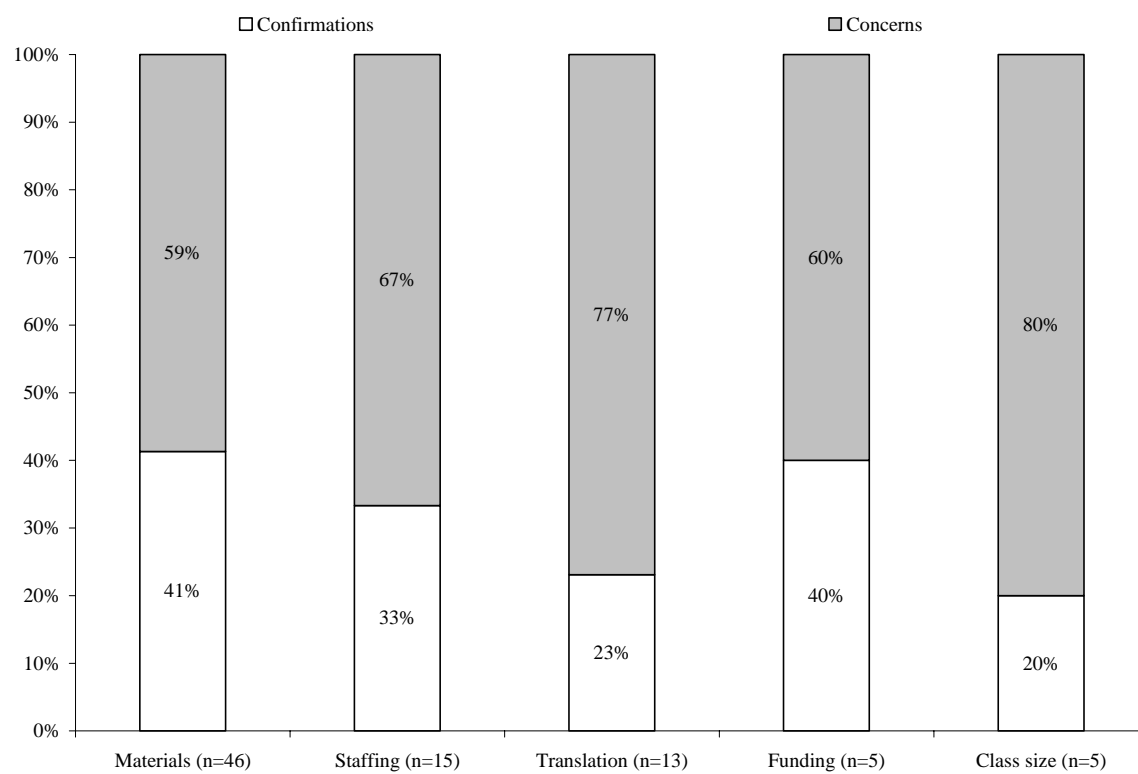
**Figure 28. Distribution of coded teacher confirmations and concerns regarding the emergent themes.**

*Teacher Perceptions of Quality People*

The teachers perceived quality people as the third most prevalent attribute of an

effective elementary bilingual education program. This attribute was comprised of six

components that were identified from previous research on effective elementary bilingual

education programs. These components included:

a) screening teacher applicants to ensure full written and oral proficiency in both languages;
b) fully credentialed bilingual and English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers continuously acquiring new knowledge regarding best practices in curriculum, instruction, and assessment;
c) all educators receiving appropriate training in the students' native language
d) all teachers in the school regularly receiving information about bilingual education, the use of data, ESL strategies, and students' cultural and linguistic characteristics that serve as assets to their academic success;
e) examining the distribution of teachers with varying levels of education, experience, and certification; and
f) improving recruitment, placement, professional development, and evaluation processes.

Most of the teachers (83%) perceived that it was important for all teachers in an

effective elementary bilingual education program to regularly receive information about

bilingual education, the use of data, ESL strategies, and students' cultural and linguistic

characteristics that serve as assets to their academic success. Half of the teachers (50%)

perceived the importance of fully credentialed bilingual and ESL teachers to continuously

acquire new knowledge regarding best practices in curriculum, instruction, and

assessment. Half of the teachers (50%) also perceived that it was important for all

educators to receive appropriate training in the students' native language.

Less than one third of the teachers (22%) perceived that the improvement of

recruitment, placement, professional development, and evaluation processes was

important. Only a few of the teachers (6%) perceived that screening teacher applicants to ensure full written and oral proficiency in both languages was an important part of an effective elementary bilingual education program. None of the teachers perceived that it was important to examine the distribution of teachers with varying levels of education, experience, and certification. Figure 29 provides a graphical representation of the distribution of teachers who perceived a component of the quality people attribute.
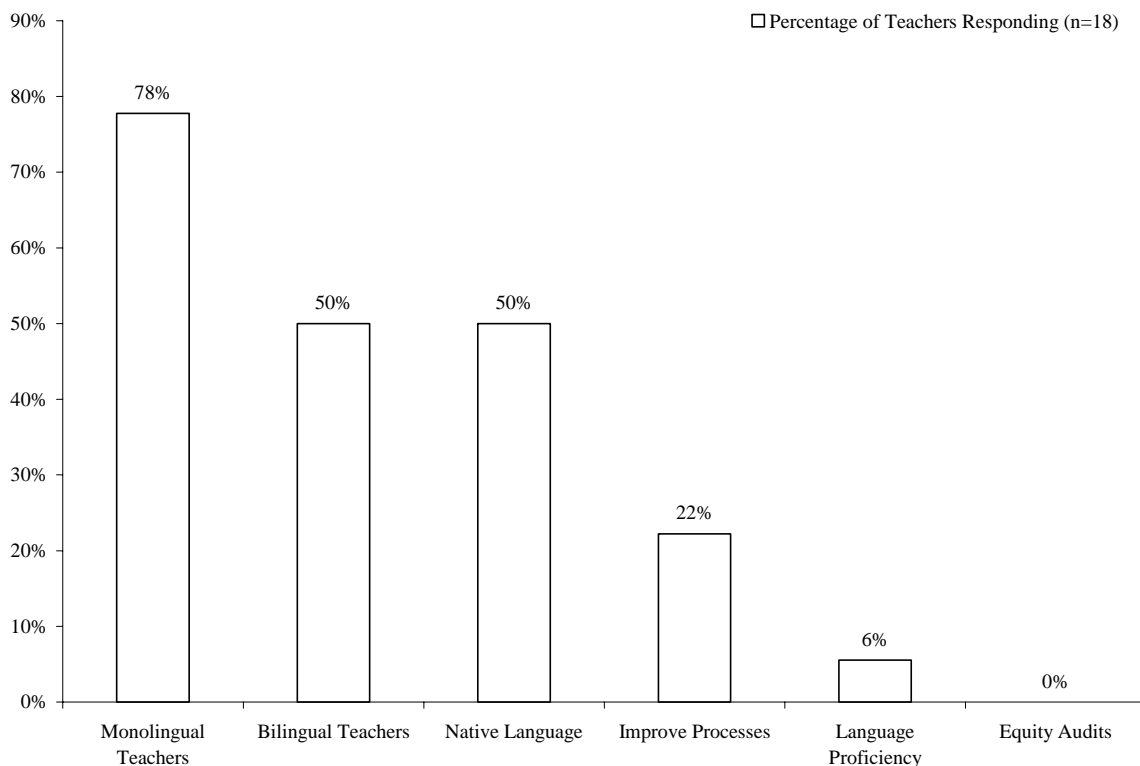


**Figure 29. Distribution of teachers who perceived a component of the quality people attribute.**

As shown in Figure 29, most of the teachers mentioned that it was important for an effective elementary bilingual education program to provide all teachers in the school with information about bilingual education, the use of data, ESL strategies, and students' cultural and linguistic characteristics that serve as assets to their academic success. One

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of the teacher confirmations about monolingual teachers included, "Our district is trying to have an ESL certified teacher at every grade level at every campus." On the other hand, one of the teacher concerns about monolingual teachers included, "ESL training for teachers has been scarce."

Half of the teachers mentioned that it was important for an effective elementary bilingual education program to have fully credentialed bilingual and ESL teachers continuously acquiring new knowledge regarding best practices in curriculum, instruction, and assessment. Some of the teachers shared confirmations regarding professional development opportunities for bilingual teachers. One teacher mentioned:

> The professional development that stands out the most sponsored by my district is the reading and writing yearly update sessions. These sessions serve as a refresher course with the latest updates on literacy activities and approaches. They are specifically designed for English Language Learners so all the activities and strategies can easily be transferred to the classroom.

Another teacher commented, "We now have a multitude of inservices specifically geared for those who do Spanish instruction or for those who work with students who are acquiring English." Conversely, some of the teachers expressed concerns regarding professional development opportunities for bilingual teachers. One teacher mentioned, "We need staff development that is continuous, not a one time deal so that we can discuss what works and what doesn't so that we can help our English Language Learners." Another teacher commented, "If they are going to continue hiring international teachers, central office personnel must provide adequate training and support for these teachers before the school year begins."

Half of the teachers also mentioned that it was important for an effective

elementary bilingual education program to have teachers, administrators, and other

educational support staff appropriately trained in the students' native languages. One of

the teacher confirmations regarding the number of staff who can communicate with

students and their families who speak a language other than English included, "We have

supportive staff outside the classroom like the counselor or nurse that speak Spanish help

by being able to help them during emotional or physical pain." On the contrary, one of

the teacher concerns included:

> I truly believe that a bilingual campus should have a bilingual Principal or Vice Principal, neither of ours one can communicate with the parents and I feel there is no relationship among the staff and the parents due to this.

Some of the teachers mentioned that it was important to improve the recruitment,

placement, professional development, and evaluation processes in order to have an

effective elementary bilingual education program. One of the teacher confirmations

regarding the status of the improvement process included, "Our principal needs to have

the power to hire the best highly qualified teaching staff to serve the specific needs of our

campus. That should not be a central office decision." However, one of the teacher

concerns regarding the status of the improvement process included, "Central office has

contributed to success of our English Language Learners by hiring more bilingual and

ESL certified teachers."

While the teachers shared a range of opinions regarding the components of the

quality people attribute, the overall perception of this attribute was confirming. While the

majority of the teacher perceptions of the language proficiency (100%) and native

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language (71%) components were concerns, the majority of the teacher perceptions of the rest of the components were confirmations. Figure 30 graphically presents the distribution of coded teacher confirmations and concerns regarding the components of the quality people attribute.
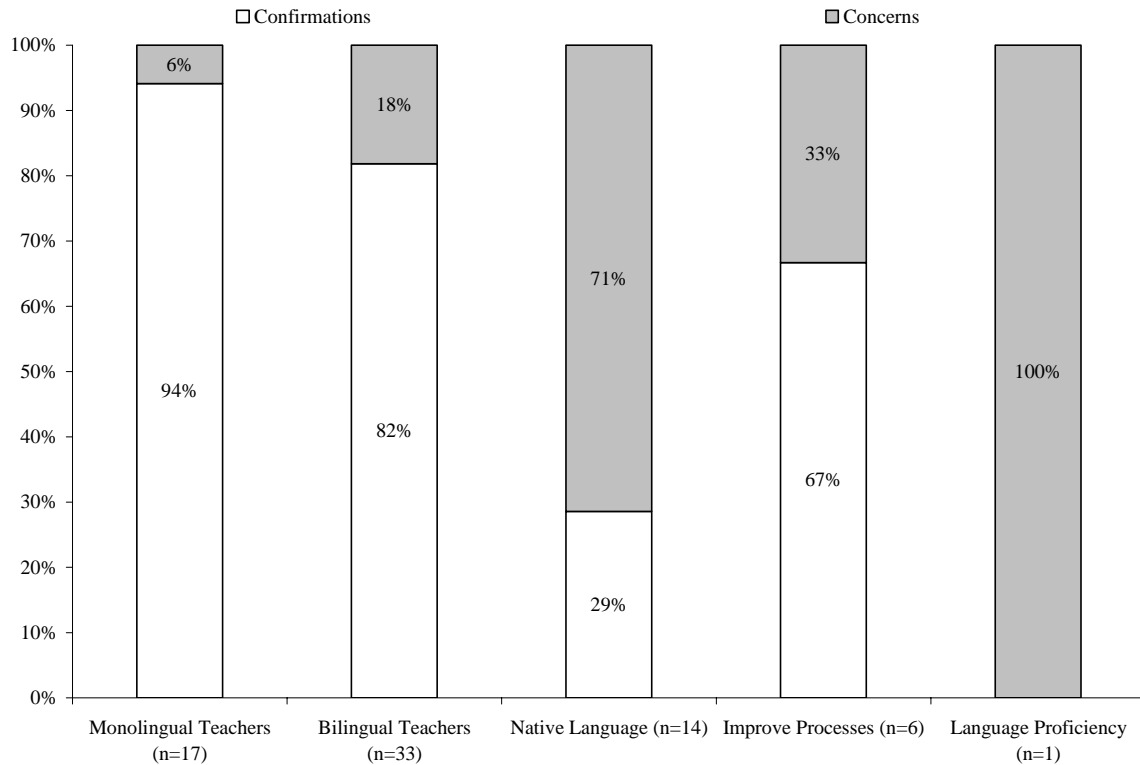


**Figure 30. Distribution of coded teacher confirmations and concerns regarding the components of the quality people attribute.**

*Teacher Perceptions of District, School, and Classroom Climate*

The teachers perceived district, school, and classroom climate as the third least prevalent attribute of an effective elementary bilingual education program. This attribute was comprised of nine components that were identified from previous research on effective elementary bilingual education programs. These components included:

a) creating positive, safe, and orderly district, school, and classroom environments;
b) placing value on the linguistic and cultural background of students;
c) holding high expectations for the academic achievement of English Language Learners;
d) ensuring the integral involvement of English Language Learners in the overall school operation;
e) working within a guiding framework from which English Language Learners can reflect on individual and collective actions and beliefs;
f) providing students with equal access to a rigorous curriculum, accountability to the same academic standards, the opportunity to graduate from school in equal proportions, and the chance to leave school fully prepared to lead productive, successful, and fulfilling lives;
g) empowering all stakeholders to participate in, and take responsibility from, their own learning;
h) developing positive interpersonal and pedagogical relationships and valuing caring as a cognitive commitment; and
i) focusing on those who are generally the least successful, the most marginalized, and the most disadvantaged in our education system.

Many of the teachers (72%) perceived that an effective elementary bilingual education program placed value on the linguistic and cultural background of students. One third of the teachers (33%) perceived that it was important to provide students with equal access to a rigorous curriculum, accountability to the same academic standards, the opportunity to graduate from school in equal proportions, and the chance to leave school fully prepared to lead productive, successful, and fulfilling lives. Less than one third of the teachers (17%) perceived that the creation of a positive, safe, and orderly district, school, and classroom environment was important.

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Less than one third of the teachers (17%) perceived that it was important to ensure the integral involvement of English Language Learners in the overall school operation. Less than one third of the teachers (17%) also perceived that it was important for an effective program to be firmly grounded on positive interpersonal and pedagogical relationships and valued caring as a cognitive commitment. Only a few teachers perceived the importance of an empowering and optimistic climate. None of the teachers perceived the importance of promoting high expectations or having a guiding framework. Figure 31 provides a graphical representation of the distribution of teachers who perceived a component of the district, school, and classroom climate attribute.
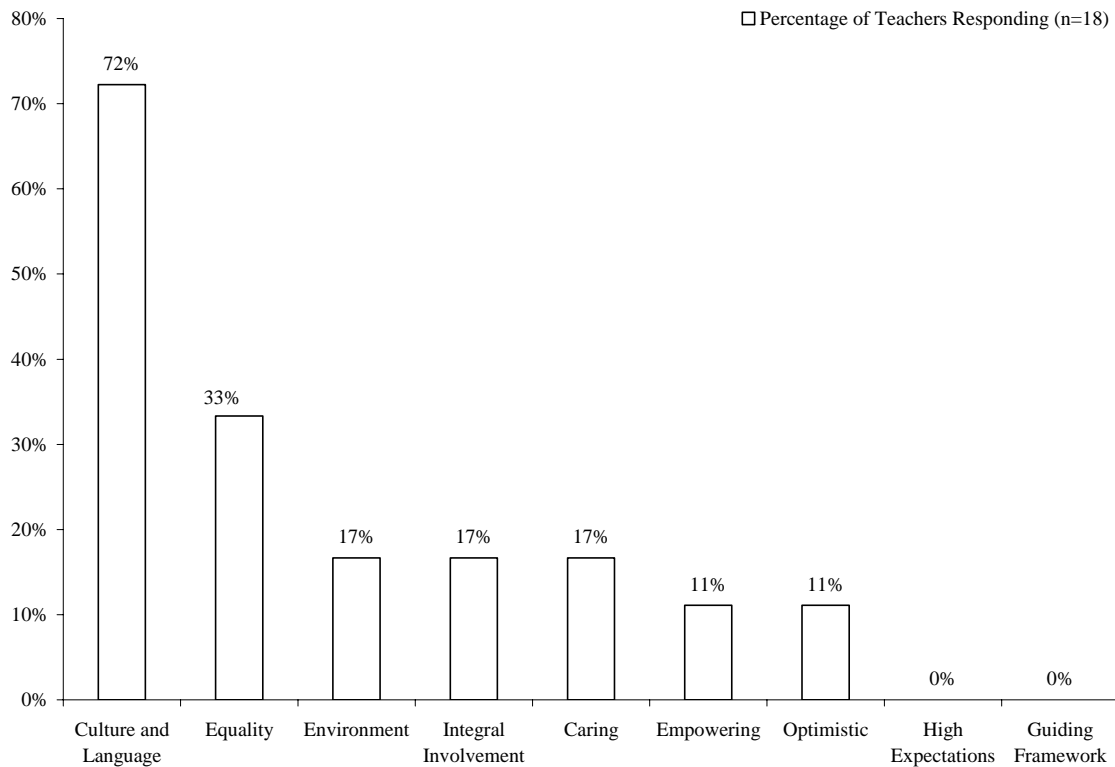


**Figure 31. Distribution of teachers who perceived a component of the district, school, and classroom climate attribute.**

As shown in Figure 31, many of the teachers mentioned that it was important for stakeholders to place value on the linguistic and cultural background of English Language Learners. One of the teacher confirmations about the respect for culture and language included, "I believe that the native language should be used whenever possible, at home, in the store, and in the classroom. I believe that the students should be able to feel proud of their heritage and maintain their native language." Another teacher commented, "When a district, school, or classroom honors the child's home language, then it will be successful." On the other hand, one of the teacher concerns about the respect for culture and language included, "Not honoring their language in a school setting, not honoring their culture and their differences at school." Another teacher responded, "Our English Language Learners also deal with discrimination and lack of culturally relevant materials that hurt their academic success. Stereotypes are also prevalent among English Language Learners, limiting their academic success."

Some of the teachers mentioned that it was important for stakeholders to ensure equality of access, outputs, sustainability, and outcomes for English Language Learners. One of the teacher confirmations about equality included, "Our principal has tried to assure every English Language Learner that they have the same opportunity to learn as any other student." Another teacher commented, "I do my best to give my English Language Learners the vocabulary needed for them to be par with a student who has been in USA all his life." Conversely, one of the teacher concerns about equality included, "The Gifted and Talented Program in offered only to monolingual students because the

students are only tested in English. Remedial and pullout programs are only for monolingual students."

A few of the teachers mentioned that it was important for the climate to be positive, safe, and orderly. One of the teacher confirmations about the environment included, "I promote a non-threatening environment where children are not afraid to make mistakes. They need to feel secure in their environment and put any barriers down in order to allow the comprehensible input in." On the contrary, one of the teacher concerns about the environment included, "Only a few teachers are willing to give anything extra for the school. The principal needs to start thinking how to make and keep her employees happy. The turnover at our school is very high every single year."

A few of the teachers also mentioned that it was important for an effective elementary bilingual education program to ensure the integral involvement of English Language Learners in the overall school operation climate. One of the teacher confirmations about the integral involvement of English Language Learners included:

> We have a program where 5th grade students volunteer 30 minutes a week to give back to the learning community. Students take a leadership role in maintaining our campus clean, reading to other students, talking to students about making good choices, etc. I think this is important because it makes my kids feel like they are an important part of this community.

However, one of the teacher concerns about the integral involvement of English Language Learners included, "Our specials classes such as PE and music do not have any language integration."

While the teachers shared a range of opinions regarding the components of the district, school, and classroom climate attribute, the overall perception of this attribute

was confirming. For instance, the teachers perceived empowering (100%) as the most

confirming component and optimistic (50%) as the least confirming component. Figure

32 graphically presents the distribution of coded teacher confirmations and concerns

regarding the components of the district, school, and classroom climate attribute.
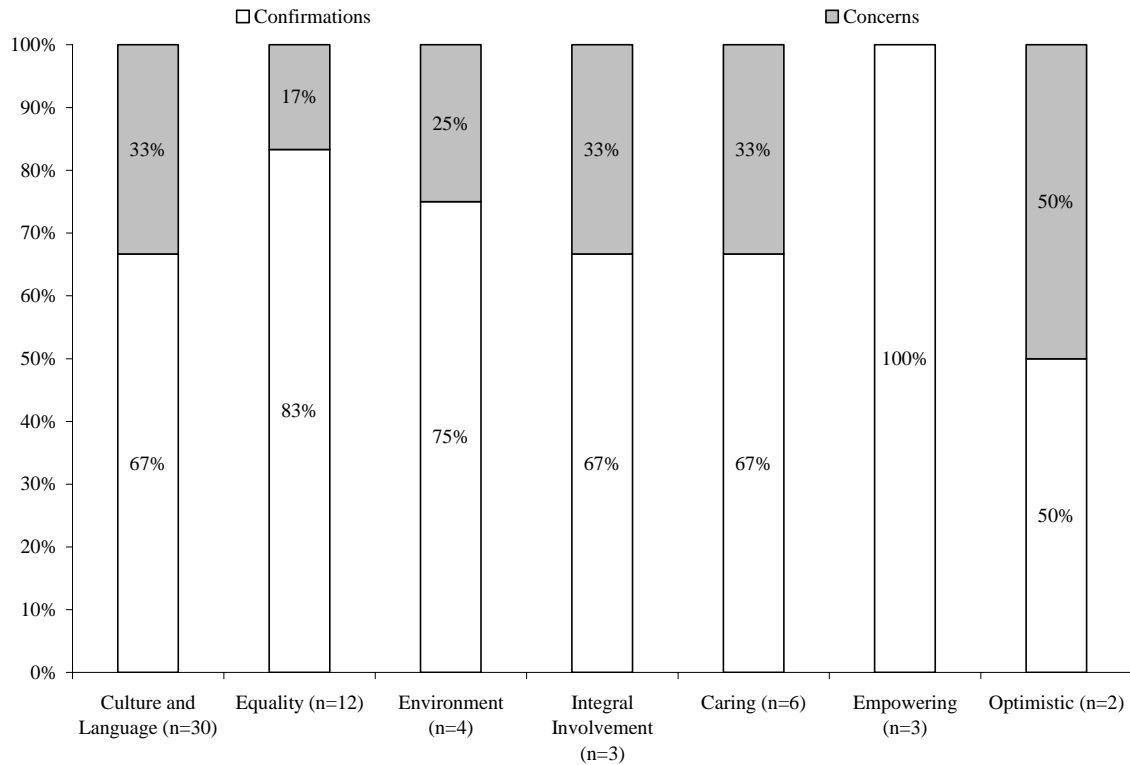


**Figure 32. Distribution of coded teacher confirmations and concerns regarding the components of the district, school, and classroom climate attribute.**

*Teacher Perceptions of Leadership, Vision, and Goals*

The teachers perceived leadership, vision, and goals as the second least prevalent

attribute of an effective elementary bilingual education program. This attribute was

comprised of 12 components that were identified from previous research on effective

elementary bilingual education programs. These components included leaders who:

a) are well informed of the rationale for bilingual education;
b) share an active commitment to bilingualism;
c) proactively involve teachers, the community, and the private sector in the design and development of the bilingual program;
d) are open to innovation;
e) create a vision and set of goals with the school community;
f) define high expectations of all students;
g) publish and disseminate high expectations so that staff, parents, and students can articulate the purpose of the school in their own words;
h) are aware of the social, political, and economic forces that interact in the educational arena;
i) raise questions about the systems, organizational frameworks, and leadership theories that privilege certain groups and/or perspectives over others;
j) challenge oppression in all forms;
k) encourage culturally and linguistically different students to find and use their individual and collective voices; and
l) transform schools from being sorting mechanisms for the larger global market to being institutions of hope and social change.

Many of the teachers (67%) perceived that an effective elementary bilingual

education program had leaders who were well informed of the rationale for bilingual

education. One third of the teachers (33%) perceived that it was important for leaders to

share an active commitment to bilingualism. One third of the teachers (33%) also

perceived the importance of leaders proactively involving teachers, the community, and

the private sector in the design and development of the bilingual program. Only a few of

the teachers (11%) perceived that it was important for leaders to be open to innovation

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while raising questions about the systems, organizational frameworks, and leadership theories that privilege certain groups and/or perspectives over others.

Only a few teachers also perceived the importance of leaders defining high expectations for all students, encouraging culturally and linguistically different students to find and use their individual and collective voices, and transforming schools from being sorting mechanisms for the larger global market to being institutions of hope and social change. None of the teachers perceived the importance of community articulation, awareness of interacting forces, and challenging oppression. Figure 33 provides a graphical representation of the distribution of teachers who perceived a component of the leadership, vision, and goals attribute.
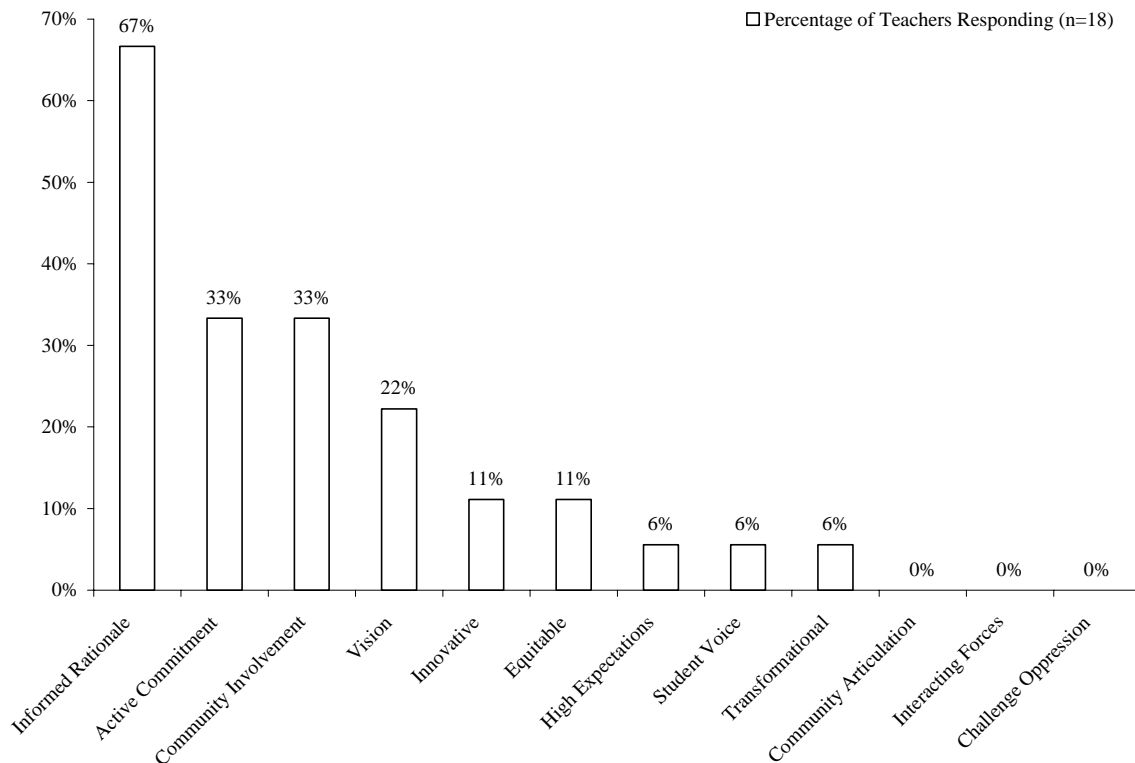


**Figure 33. Distribution of teachers who perceived a component of the leadership, vision, and goals attribute.**

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As shown in Figure 33, many of the teachers mentioned that it was important for the educational leadership to be well informed of the rationale for bilingual education. One of the teacher confirmations regarding knowledgeable leaders included, "Our principal knows the different programs for our English Language Learners. She knows the research on second language learners. This contributes to the success of the program." On the other hand, one of the teacher concerns regarding knowledgeable leaders included, "One of the things that contributes the least to the academic success of English Language Learners are unknowledgeable campus leaders who do not understand differences in cultures and the second language acquisition process."

Some of the teachers mentioned that it was important for the educational leadership to share an active commitment to bilingualism in order for an elementary bilingual education program to be effective. There were no teacher concerns about active commitment. One of the teacher confirmations included, "My principal supports the English Language Learner program by believing in it and always standing by what is best for the child."

Some of the teachers also mentioned that it was important for the educational leadership to involve teachers, the community, and the private sector in the proactive design and development of the bilingual program. One of the teacher confirmations about community involvement included, "It is all a team effort. Family, school, administrators, and students all play a big part in ensuring that every bilingual student becomes truly bilingual and a successful member of society." On the contrary, one of the teacher

concerns about community involvement included, "The principal has no visible relationship with the bilingual parents."

While the teachers shared a range of opinions regarding the components of the leadership, vision, and goals attribute, the overall perception of this attribute was confirming. For instance, the teachers perceived active commitment, innovation, and high expectations (100%) as the most confirming components and equitable, student voice, and transformational (50%) as the least confirming components. Figure 34 graphically presents the distribution of coded teacher confirmations and concerns regarding the components of the leadership, vision, and goals attribute.
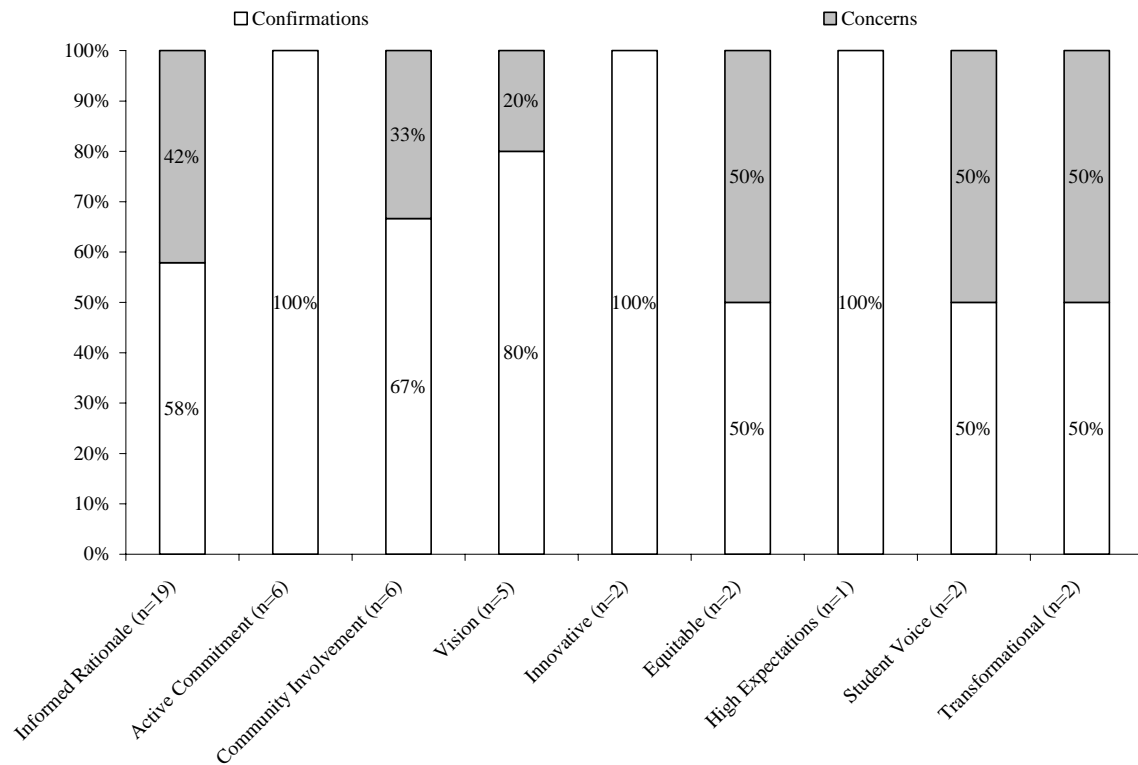


**Figure 34. Distribution of coded teacher confirmations and concerns regarding the components of the leadership, vision, and goals attribute.**

*Teacher Perceptions of Organization, Accountability, and Assessment*

The teachers perceived organization, accountability, and assessment as the least prevalent attribute of an effective elementary bilingual education program. This attribute was comprised of four components that were identified from previous research on effective elementary bilingual education programs. These components included:

a) systematic assessment of student achievement informs ongoing efforts to improve academic success,
b) the elementary bilingual education program is an integral part of the district and campus academic plan and is widely respected by the administration,
c) there is strong accountability for the success of all students, and
d) data is used appropriately.

Less than one third of the teachers (28%) perceived that it was important for the systematic assessment of student achievement to inform ongoing efforts in an effective elementary bilingual education program. Less than one third of the teachers (22%) also perceived that strong accountability for the success of all students was important. Only a few teachers (6%) perceived that an effective elementary bilingual education program is an integral part of the district and campus academic plan and is widely respected by the administration. Only a few teachers (6%) also perceived that the appropriate use of data was important. Figure 35 provides a graphical representation of the distribution of teachers who perceived a component of the organization, accountability, and assessment attribute.
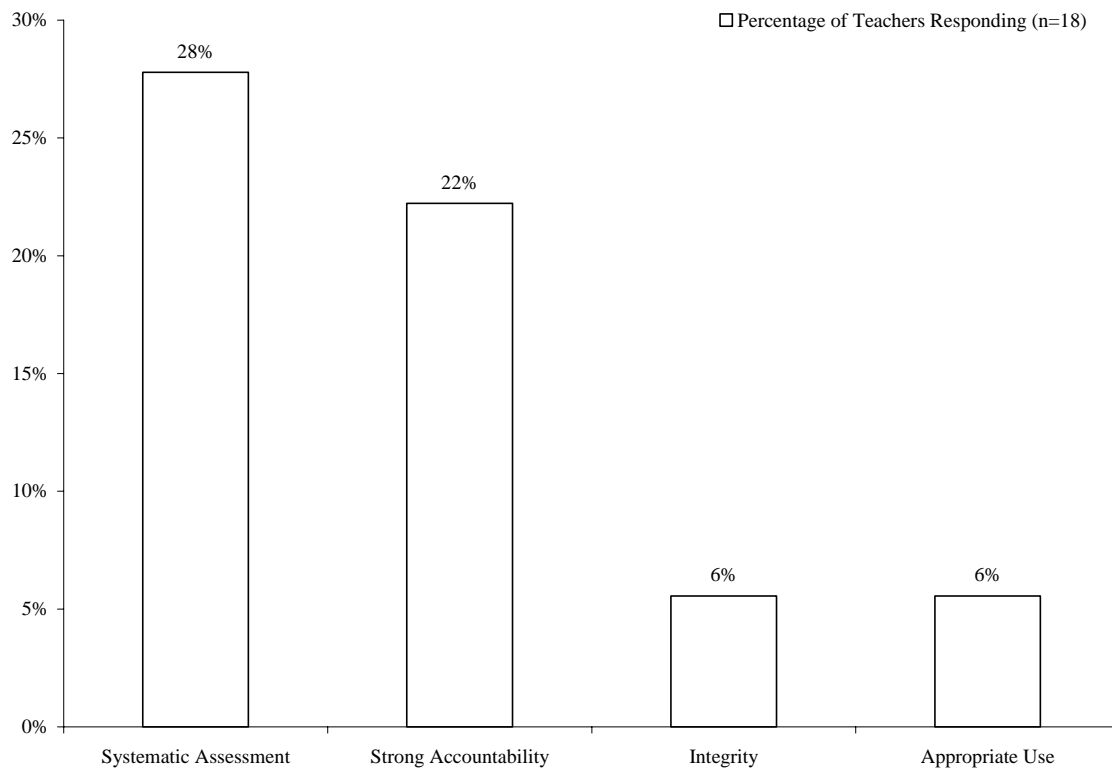
**Figure 35. Distribution of teachers who perceived a component of the organization, accountability, and assessment attribute.**

As shown in Figure 35, some of the teachers mentioned that it was important to have systematic assessment of student achievement to inform ongoing efforts to improve academic success. One of the teacher confirmations regarding systematic and ongoing assessment included, "Providing learners with immediate feedback during the learning process and constant readjustment and assessment of individual progress."

On the other hand, one of the teacher concerns regarding systematic and ongoing assessment included:

> Amidst all of this standardized testing that we all get caught up in on a yearly basis, many important things are often pushed aside in order to meet state and district goals. This oftentimes includes second language acquisition for many English Language Learners. The level and rate at which students are reaching these levels of acquisition are often not top priority when thinking about test scores.

Some of the teachers also mentioned that it was important to have strong accountability for all students in an effective elementary bilingual education program. There were no teacher confirmations regarding accountability for all students. One of the teacher concerns included, "One of the things that contributes the least to the academic success of English Language Learners is No Child Left Behind."

While the teachers shared a range of opinions regarding the components of the organization, accountability, and assessment attribute, the overall perception of this attribute was concerning. For instance, the teachers perceived strong accountability (100%) and appropriate use (100%) as the most concerning components and integrity (50%) as the least confirming component. Figure 36 graphically presents the distribution of coded teacher confirmations and concerns regarding the components of the organization, accountability, and assessment attribute.
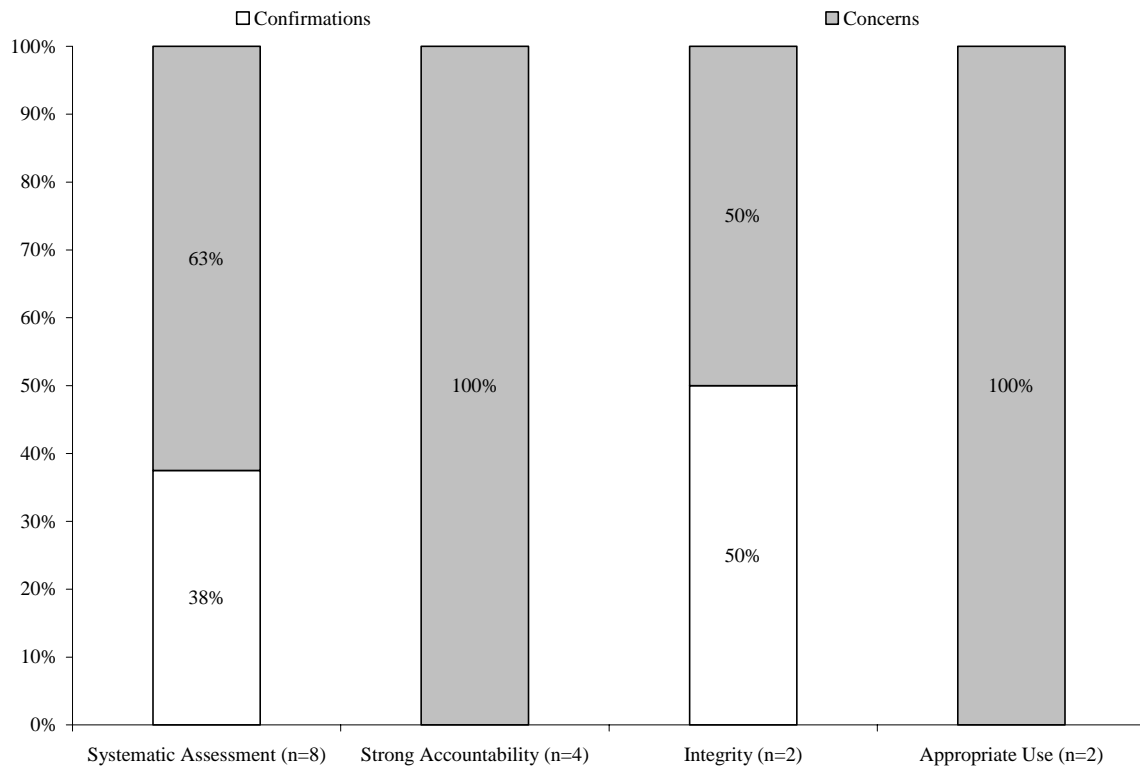
**Figure 36. Distribution of coded teacher confirmations and concerns regarding the components of the organization, accountability, and assessment attribute.**

*Parent Perceptions*

Parents of English Language Learners who had been enrolled in the district's elementary bilingual education program for at least the past three years were invited to participate in this study. Forty-six parents representing sixty-one of the English Language Learners at eight schools participated in the study. The parents participated in a focus group interview at the school their children attended. The parents verbally responded to a series of focus group questions regarding the perceived attributes of effective elementary bilingual education programs (Appendix C). The perceptions were combined and coded by the researcher as they related to the components of the seven attributes of effective elementary bilingual education programs that have been identified in previous research on effective elementary bilingual education programs. These seven attributes included: (a) leadership, vision, and goals; (b) district, school, and classroom climate; (c) program articulation; (d) organization, accountability, and assessment; (e) quality people; (f) parental and community involvement; and (g) curriculum and instruction. Additional codes were assigned to emergent themes that were not identified in the literature review. The additional themes that emerged from the parent focus group interviews included: (a) funding, (b) materials, (c) staffing, (d) class size, (e) translation of materials, (f) socioeconomic status, (g) educational systems, and (h) homework.

The parents perceived parental and community involvement (32%) as the most prevalent attribute of an effective elementary bilingual education program. The parents perceived district, school, and classroom climate (19%) and program articulation (14%) as the second and third most prevalent attributes. Taken as a whole, the emergent themes

(12%) were perceived as the fourth most prevalent by the parents, followed by the

curriculum and instruction (8%) and quality people (6%) attributes. The parents

perceived organization, accountability, and assessment (4%) and leadership, vision, and

goals (4%) as the least prevalent attributes of an effective elementary bilingual education

program. Figure 37 provides a graphical representation of the distribution of the coded

parent responses to the perceived attributes and emergent themes.



n=438
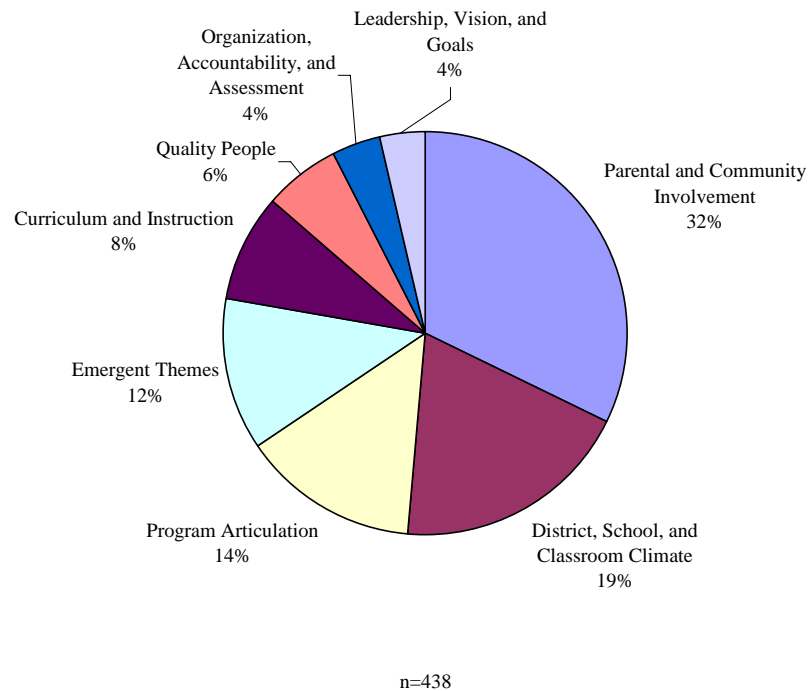
**Figure 37. Overall distribution of coded parent responses to the perceived attributes and emergent themes.**

Each coded parent response was also labeled as a confirmation or a concern by

the researcher. A response was labeled as a confirmation if the attribute or emergent

theme was perceived as something that contributed to the success of English Language

Learners. A response was labeled as a concern if the attribute or emergent theme was

perceived as something that was either not currently present or not working well in the

classroom, school, or district.

The parent perceptions of the curriculum and instruction, parental and community

involvement, quality people, and district, school, and classroom climate attributes were

mostly confirming. The parent perceptions of the program articulation, emergent themes,

organization, accountability, and assessment, and leadership, vision, and goals attributes

were mostly concerning. Figure 38 graphically presents the distribution of coded parent

confirmations and concerns regarding the perceived attributes and emergent themes. The

perceived attributes and emergent themes are presented in the order they were mentioned

by the parents.
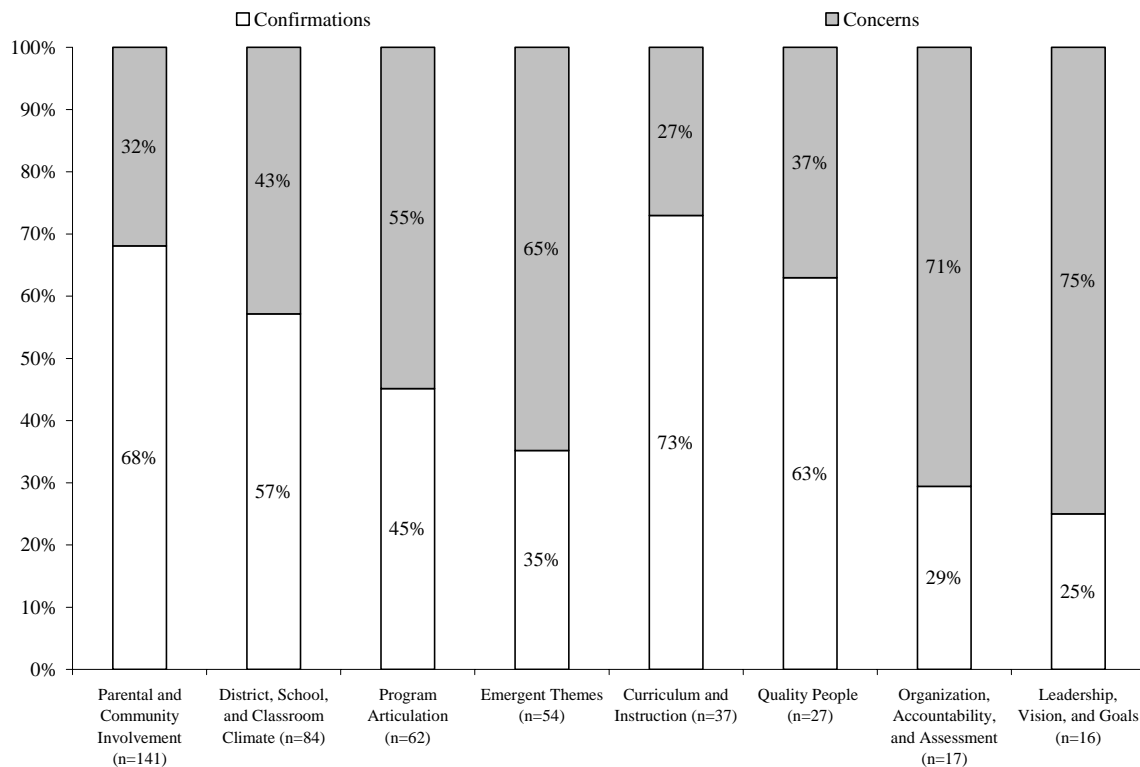


**Figure 38. Distribution of coded parent confirmations and concerns regarding the perceived attributes and emergent themes.**

The following narrative is a brief description of the parent confirmations and concerns regarding the seven attributes.

As shown in Figure 38, many of the parents conveyed a confirmation regarding parental and community involvement. One parent mentioned, "The parents should make them do their homework. The parents should have direct involvement with the teacher and for them to help the kids to do their homework. That may be the success of the children." On the other hand, other parents shared a concern regarding parental and community involvement. One parent commented, "Sometimes parents cannot come to school because they work, they have no car, they live far away from school, because there are different schools attending here. They cannot make it."

More than half of the parents shared a confirmation regarding district, school, and classroom climate. One parent responded, "I feel good that there are procedures in place at school. Someone is watching my child." Conversely, some of the parents conveyed a concern regarding district, school, and classroom climate. One parent mentioned, "The teacher is not very strong. When the teacher talks with us, I tell her that she is the teacher, what kind of discipline do you have with the children? The teacher needs to be more strict."

Less than half of the parents shared a confirmation regarding program articulation. One parent commented, "I think things are going really well. My child did not speak English when we moved here. Now she is really speaking good English. She is learning both languages. We have four children and they have all learned here." On the other hand, a few of the parents expressed a concern regarding program articulation. One

parent responded, "We do not feel as though we are very much in the communication loop as far as what is expected."

Many of the parents shared a confirmation regarding curriculum and instruction. One parent commented:

> I told the teacher that I want my daughter to speak more English. The teacher said that she would talk with her in English more. I asked my daughter and she said that she was learning more English. The teacher did something about it.

On the contrary, other parents expressed a concern regarding curriculum and instruction. One parent responded, "I would ask the teacher and she did not know how my daughter was doing. The teacher did not know her."

More than half of the parents expressed a confirmation regarding quality people. One parent responded, "I think the district is good. I have been in other districts that are worse. The district is finding more teachers and more classrooms are being built. I think the district is doing a good job." On the contrary, some of the parents conveyed a concern regarding quality people. One parent mentioned, "The teachers cannot have a good communication with the kids because they do not speak the language."

Some of the parents conveyed a confirmation regarding leadership, vision, and goals. One parent mentioned, "I think the principal wants what is best for the children, she gives support to the teachers as best she can. Not everyone is going to be happy with the principal. She just does the best she can." Conversely, other parents shared a concern regarding leadership, vision, and goals. One parent commented, "I believe that if the principal were Hispanic or was bilingual, the system would improve. She would give

more effort so that all the kids would improve. She would not leave the bilingual kids

behind."

A few of the parents conveyed a confirmation regarding organization,

accountability, and assessment. One parent mentioned, "I think that the support is very

important. They should continuously monitor them." However, most of the parents

shared a concern regarding organization, accountability, and assessment. One parent

commented, "I think one thing that contributes to the academic success is basing the

academic results of a test. The pressure that the principal, teachers it all trickles down to

the poor kids. I mean, poor principal, poor teachers."

*Parent Perceptions of Parental and Community Involvement*

The parents perceived parental and community involvement as the most prevalent

attribute of an effective elementary bilingual education program. This attribute was

comprised of six components that were identified from previous research on effective

elementary bilingual education programs. These components included:

a) all parents know the rationale and the critical components of the program;
b) parents and community establish partnerships with schools, extend learning into the home, and reinforce academic values outside school;
c) all parents are strong advocates of the program;
d) stakeholders implement effective strategies for overcoming common obstacles to involving parents and community members in the education of English Language Learners;
e) educators carefully examine what is actually known about culturally different families, their attitudes regarding education, and how they support their children's education through the family and their informal social networks; and
f) community family centers provide parental information, social service referrals, lending libraries, meeting places, and translation services.

Parents at all of the campuses (100%) perceived that the establishment of parent

and community partnerships with schools, the extension of learning into the home, and

the reinforcement academic values outside school were parts of an effective elementary

bilingual education program. Parents at all of the campuses (100%) also perceived that it

was important to carefully examine what is actually known about culturally different

families, their attitudes regarding education, and how they support their children's

education through the family and their informal social networks.

Parents at all of the campuses (100%) perceived that it was essential to develop

effective strategies for overcoming common obstacles to involving parents and

community members in the education of English Language Learners. Parents at many of

the campuses (75%) perceived that it was important that all parents knew the rationale

and the critical components of the program. Parents at many of the campuses (75%) also

perceived the importance of community family centers that provided parental

information, social service referrals, lending libraries, meeting places, and translation

services. Parents at less than half of the campuses (38%) perceived that it was important

that all parents were strong advocates of the program. Figure 39 provides a graphical

representation of the distribution of campuses where parents perceived a component of

the parental and community involvement attribute.
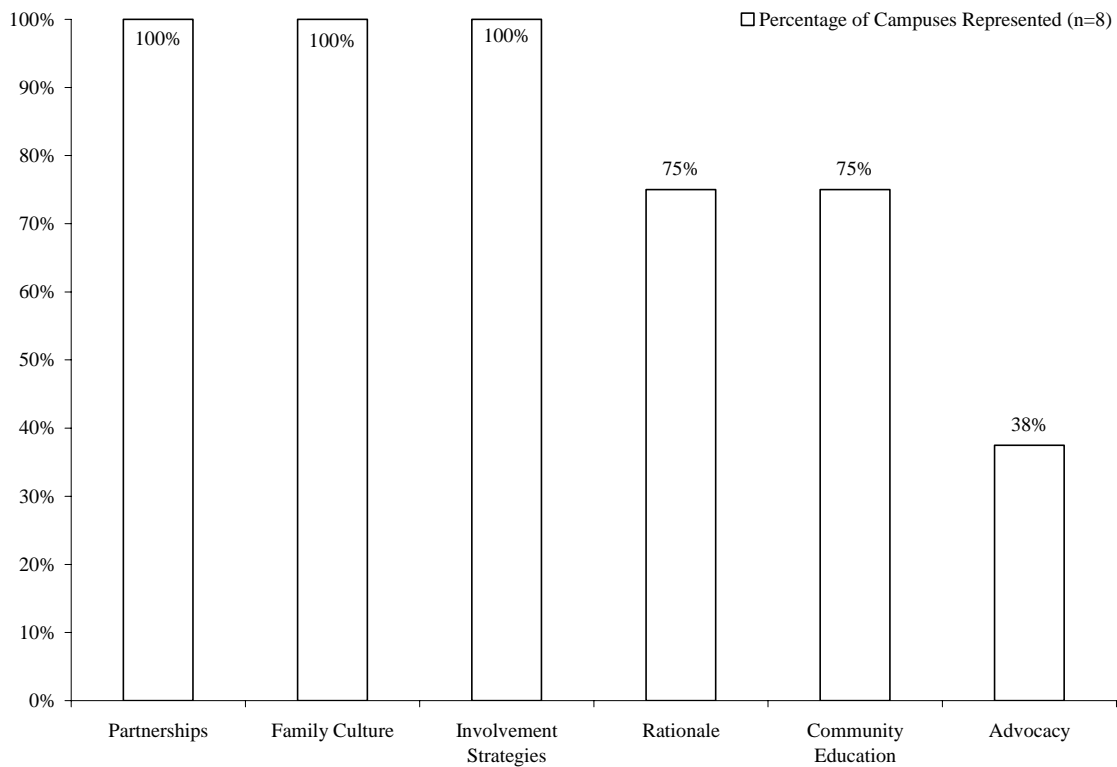


**Figure 39. Distribution of campuses where parents perceived a component of the parental and community involvement attribute.**

As shown in Figure 39, parents at all of the campuses mentioned that when

parents and community establish partnerships with schools, they extend learning into the

home and reinforce academic values outside school. One of the parent confirmations

about partnerships included, "Parent involvement is extremely important or we as parents fail. We cannot blame it on the teachers or on our kids. There is a part that we have to do that no one else can do." Another parent mentioned, "You have to find time to help your children solve their problems. That is my point of view. We need to spend time with them and work with them when they are here at home." On the other hand, one of the parent concerns about partnerships included, "I think that when parents do not get involved in the student's activities or their homework, then it is a problem." Another parent commented, "I get home at five and by the time my daughter does her chores, eats, and takes a shower, it is seven or eight. Now you want me to work with her on math, it is not possible."

Parents at all of the campuses also mentioned the importance of educators carefully examining what is actually known about culturally different families, their attitudes regarding education, and how they support their children's education through the family and their informal social networks. One of the parent confirmations included, "We read a lot at home and when he was younger we would push Spanish strongly because we felt that it was really important to have a strong foundation in Spanish." Another parent mentioned:

> Try to nourish them well and send them to bed early and have some time for play. Spend time with them. Try to see what are their best talents and try to encourage and focus them in that direction, like sports and drawing.

Parents at all of the campuses mentioned that it was important to incorporate effective strategies for overcoming common obstacles to involving parents and community members in the education of English Language Learners.

One of the parent confirmations about involvement strategies included:

> It is much easier at a neighborhood school. All the parents knew each other. When we lived in apartments, we all knew each other. We had carnivals at least once a year. Something fun for the kids where we paint faces.

Another parent mentioned:

> I think the family literacy nights have been very helpful, we went a few weeks ago and it was very well organized. There were lots of good activities and it was bilingual, of course, you got to choose the section you wanted to go to.

Conversely, one of the parent concerns about involvement strategies included:

> My daughter goes to one school because she is not bilingual but my son goes to another school because of the bilingual program. I would prefer that my children were at the same school. It is a lot of work for us as parents to be at different schools. I told them that I do not want to separate the kids but they did not listen to me.

Another parent commented:

> Last year many parents did not want to enroll in the bilingual system because of the very long bus ride. If they had an emergency, it was too far away to come and pick up the kid. They would have to spend a whole hour on the bus. My brother's son had to spend an hour and a half.

Parents at most of the campuses mentioned that it was important for all parents to know the rationale and the critical components of the program. Some of the parent confirmations regarding the awareness of the critical elements of the elementary bilingual education program included, "I support the bilingual program, because my kids are reading in both English and Spanish. For me, the problem starts when they go to fourth grade and they are doing Spanish only. They should be half-and-half at that point." Another parent commented, "If you learn your first language well, you can learn another language more easily, that is what we have been told."

On the contrary, one of the parent concerns included:

> I do not like that, because our kids do not speak English. Also, there are so many people that speak Spanish, that even though we live in the US, I think it should be more like half-and-half English and Spanish. Because they are getting behind.

Another parent mentioned:

> The district should spend more time instructing in English at school because they are in the bilingual program and it is better for them. As parents, we can help them with Spanish but we struggle with English. If the child does not get it a school, the child will fall behind and be left behind. We will take care of the Spanish if the school takes care of the English.

> Parents at most of the campuses also mentioned the importance of stakeholders

creating community family centers to provide parental information, social service

referrals, lending libraries, meeting places, and translation services. One of the parent

confirmations about community education included, "I really like the Parents Academy.

The family specialist tries to make the parents better parents. She educates the parents so

we are better parents for our kids in order to help them succeed." Another parent

commented:

> English classes for parents would be very good so that we can help with homework and be informed and help them with studying. It would good to have a higher level English and help with their math so that I don't have to say I don't know. It would be very good. 150% better.

However, one of the parent concerns about community education included, "I wanted to

come to the classes but I couldn't come because of my work. They have tried to offer

classes but people quit coming because sometimes the classes are in the morning or they

get tired." Another parent mentioned, "We cannot help them with English homework.

There are words that the child cannot find in the dictionary. We cannot help our kids

unless we are taught English."

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Parents at some of the campuses mentioned that all parents are strong advocates of an effective bilingual education program. One of the parent confirmations regarding the level of advocacy among parents included, "It is very important that we, as parents, help our kids. Our mission should be to make sure that things are done right and not to keep silent. But, to talk about things and to tell about the problems." In contrast, one of the parent concerns regarding the level of advocacy among parents included, "That is a problem. People who have kids who attend the school should have shown up to this meeting."

While the parents shared a range of opinions regarding the components of the parental and community involvement attribute, the overall perception of this attribute was confirming. While the parent perceptions of the community education (52%) and rationale (59%) components were mostly concerns, the majority of the parent perceptions of the rest of the components were confirmations. Figure 40 graphically presents the distribution of coded parent confirmations and concerns regarding the components of the parental and community involvement attribute.
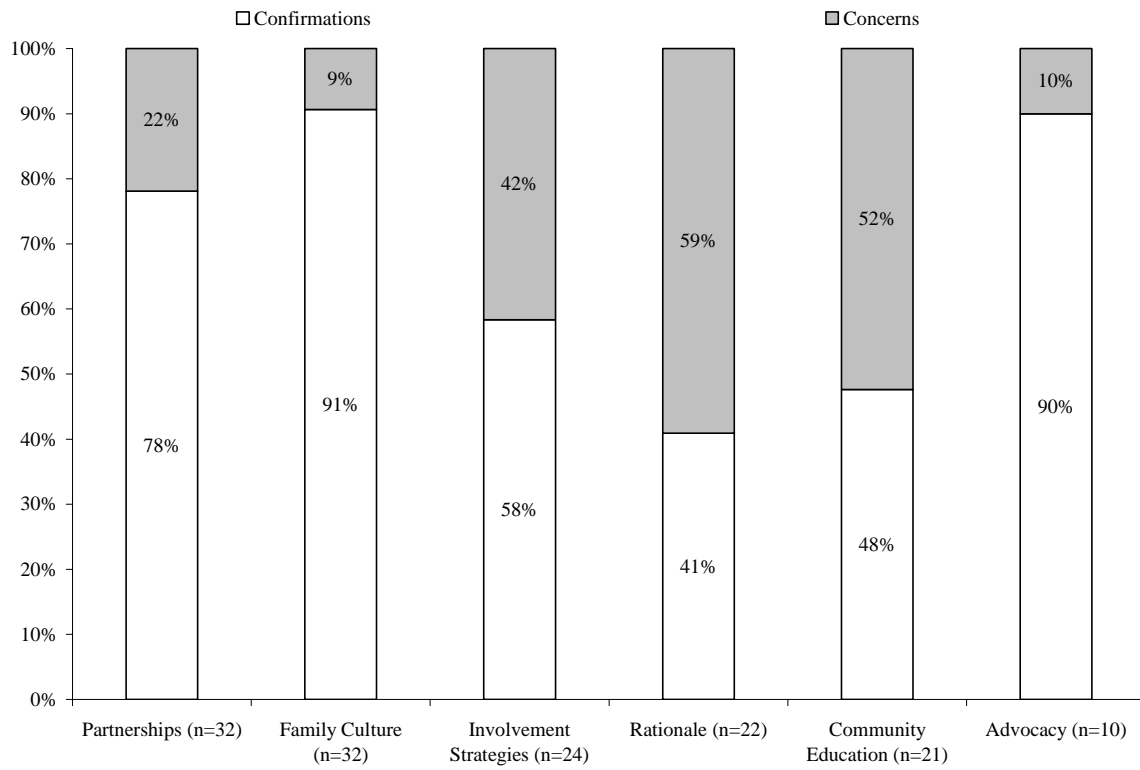
Figure 40. Distribution of coded parent confirmations and concerns regarding the components of the parental and community involvement attribute.

*Parent Perceptions of District, School, and Classroom Climate*

The parents perceived district, school, and classroom climate as the second most prevalent attribute of an effective elementary bilingual education program. This attribute was comprised of nine components that were identified from previous research on effective elementary bilingual education programs. These components included:

a)  creating positive, safe, and orderly district, school, and classroom environments;
b)  placing value on the linguistic and cultural background of students;
c)  holding high expectations for the academic achievement of English Language Learners;
d)  ensuring the integral involvement of English Language Learners in the overall school operation;
e)  working within a guiding framework from which English Language Learners can reflect on individual and collective actions and beliefs;
f)  providing students with equal access to a rigorous curriculum, accountability to the same academic standards, the opportunity to graduate from school in equal proportions, and the chance to leave school fully prepared to lead productive, successful, and fulfilling lives;
g)  empowering all stakeholders to participate in, and take responsibility from, their own learning;
h)  developing positive interpersonal and pedagogical relationships and valuing caring as a cognitive commitment; and
i)  focusing on those who are generally the least successful, the most marginalized, and the most disadvantaged in our education system.

Parents at almost all of the campuses (88%) perceived that the creation of a positive, safe, and orderly district, school, and classroom environment was an important part of an effective elementary bilingual education program. Parents at almost all of the campuses (88%) also perceived that it was important to provide students with equal access to a rigorous curriculum, accountability to the same academic standards, the opportunity to graduate from school in equal proportions, and the chance to leave school fully prepared to lead productive, successful, and fulfilling lives.

Parents at most of the campuses (75%) perceived that it was essential to place value on the linguistic and cultural background of students. Parents at most of the campuses (75%) also perceived that an effective program was firmly grounded on positive interpersonal and pedagogical relationships and valued caring as a cognitive commitment. Parents at less than half of the campuses (38%) perceived that it was important to empower all stakeholders to participate in, and take responsibility from, their own learning. Parents at only a few campuses perceived the importance of an optimistic climate and high expectations. None of the parents perceived the importance of a guiding framework or the integral involvement of English Language Learners. Figure 41 provides a graphical representation of the distribution of campuses where parents perceived a component of the district, school, and classroom climate attribute.
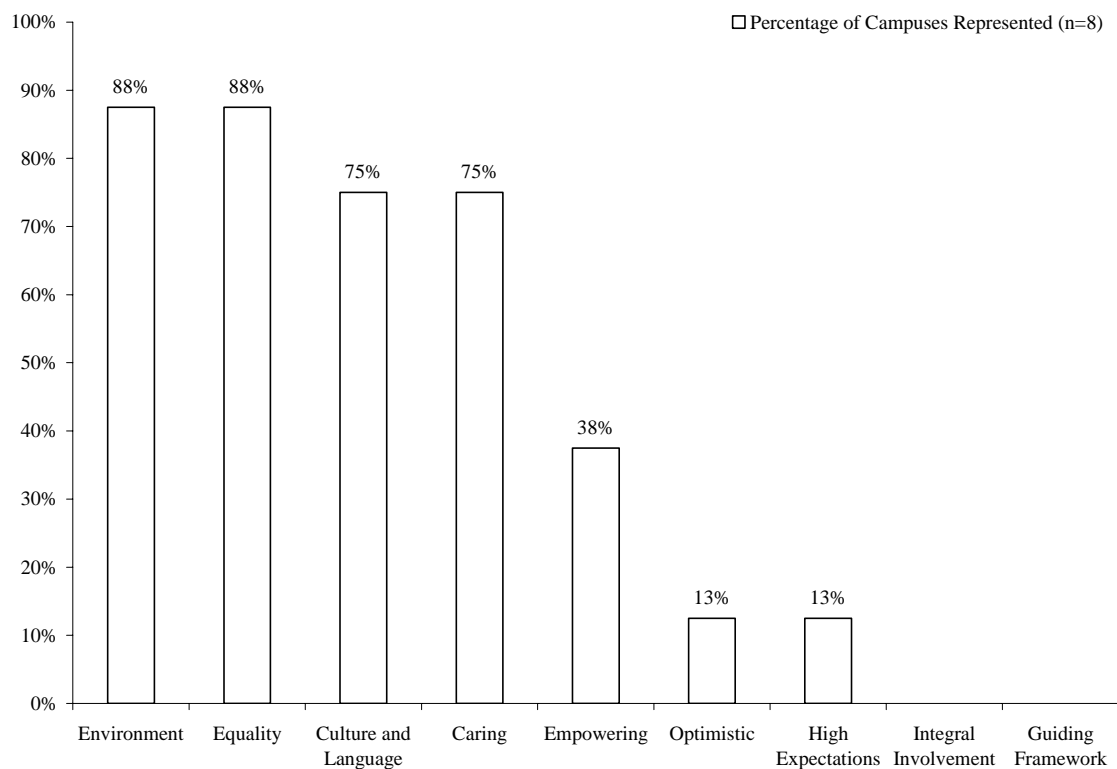
**Figure 41. Distribution of campuses where parents perceived a component of the district, school, and classroom climate attribute.**

As shown in Figure 41, parents at almost all of the campuses mentioned that it

was important for the climates to be positive, safe, and orderly. One of the parent

confirmations about the environment included:

> The principal was good. She did all kinds of fun things. My kids were having
> problems at the beginning but she found a way to encourage them with self-
> manager motivation methods. Awards and gifts work with my kids. The kids good
> grades and behave.

Another parent commented, "There is a procedure for picking children after school so

that my child is not going to be let loose and I think the principal has something to do

with that and I appreciate that."

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On the other hand, one of the parent concerns about the environment included:

> This teacher is very strict. I went to go talk to her and she explained that the army is very strict and the people are better for it. I told her that this is not the Army. I need to give your child ten pages of homework because they need to practice what I teach them in the morning. The way I teach it is the way the child is going to learn.

Another parent mentioned:

> My daughter does not pay attention in class. All she does is write notes back and forth with the boys. When I asked the teacher about it, she had nothing to say. She does not have any control in the classroom. That is why I am concerned and that is why I came to this meeting. The teacher needs to be more strict.

Parents at almost all of the campuses also mentioned that it was important to provide students with equal access to a rigorous curriculum, accountability to the same academic standards, the opportunity to graduate from school in equal proportions, and the chance to leave school fully prepared to lead productive, successful, and fulfilling lives. One of the parent confirmations about equality included, "My kids really learned a lot at their other school. They had additional classes. For example, they had a class that started at 7:00 AM. They offered additional counseling and tutoring and additional practice before an exam." Conversely, one of the parent concerns about equality included:

> I am not sure if it is the teacher or the school, but if tutoring was offered earlier in the year instead of when big tests are coming. If the child is struggling in the beginning, I wish they could get tutoring then.

Parents at most of the schools mentioned that it was important for stakeholders to place value on the linguistic and cultural background of English Language Learners. One of the parent confirmations about respecting culture and language included, "The district has the patience to treat Mexicans well. They do currently treat Mexicans pretty well. I

think that it is important for the district to try to treat everyone the same and I think they

do it OK." Another parent mentioned:

> What I like the most is that the children are exposed more to the culture than to other children. The teacher should expose them and celebrate and make them proud of the Hispanic heritage. The children come home and they feel proud that they speak both.

On the contrary, one of the parent concerns about respecting culture and language

included, "The children should have an opportunity to learn it seems as though the

children's native language is not valued very much." Another parent commented, "I think

the teachers should be more patient. I think teachers, because they are Anglo, treat kids

differently, they use a different psychology. I think it is a culture problem that should be

corrected."

Parents at most of the schools also mentioned that it was important for the climate

to be firmly grounded on positive interpersonal and pedagogical relationships that valued

caring as a cognitive commitment.

One of the parent confirmations about a caring environment included:

> The principal got involved with everything. From directing traffic to putting on a costume at Halloween. She would visit every room and worked very hard every day. She even wore her pajamas to school one day! She got involved with kids.

Another parent mentioned:

> Our teacher is patient and makes our son feel comfortable in class. I think what has contributed to success and to making my son want to come to school everyday is that he honestly loves his teacher. It makes it so much easier to drop him off in the morning. He really likes her and gives him a strong relationship and makes him ready to start the day.

However, one of the parent concerns about a caring environment included:

> It seems as though the child only sees the principal if they are in trouble. Every once in a while, maybe once or twice a year it would be nice for the child to have a one-on-one with the child.

Another parent commented:

> I believe that teachers should be better psychology for kids, to motivate kids, because when they mistreat them. Kids lose all motivation, they lose interest, they lose respect of the teacher, they get scared. They are scared of them, they do not want to ask questions. I think they should have more patience. Be warmer, get closer. Kids will be more successful.

> Parents at some of the schools also mentioned that is was important to empower

all stakeholders to participate in, and take responsibility from, their own learning. One of

the parent confirmations about an empowering environment included:

> I am happy with the teachers we have. My kids have made a lot of progress, they are finding a way to get even better. Originally they had problems but they are finding a way to improve their development. I am very happy and that is my point of view.

In contrast, one of the parent concerns about an empowering environment included:

> Everything is given in writing, everything is on paper. It encourages the kids to not make any effort. I think that the teacher has to be strict and make the kids go to the board and do an addition or subtraction or division problem on the board.

While the parents shared a range of opinions regarding the components of the district, school, and classroom climate attribute, the overall perception of this attribute was confirming. While the majority of the parent perceptions of the culture and language component were concerns (72%), the majority of the parent perceptions of the rest of the components were confirmations. Figure 42 graphically presents the distribution of coded parent confirmations and concerns regarding the components of the district, school, and classroom climate attribute.
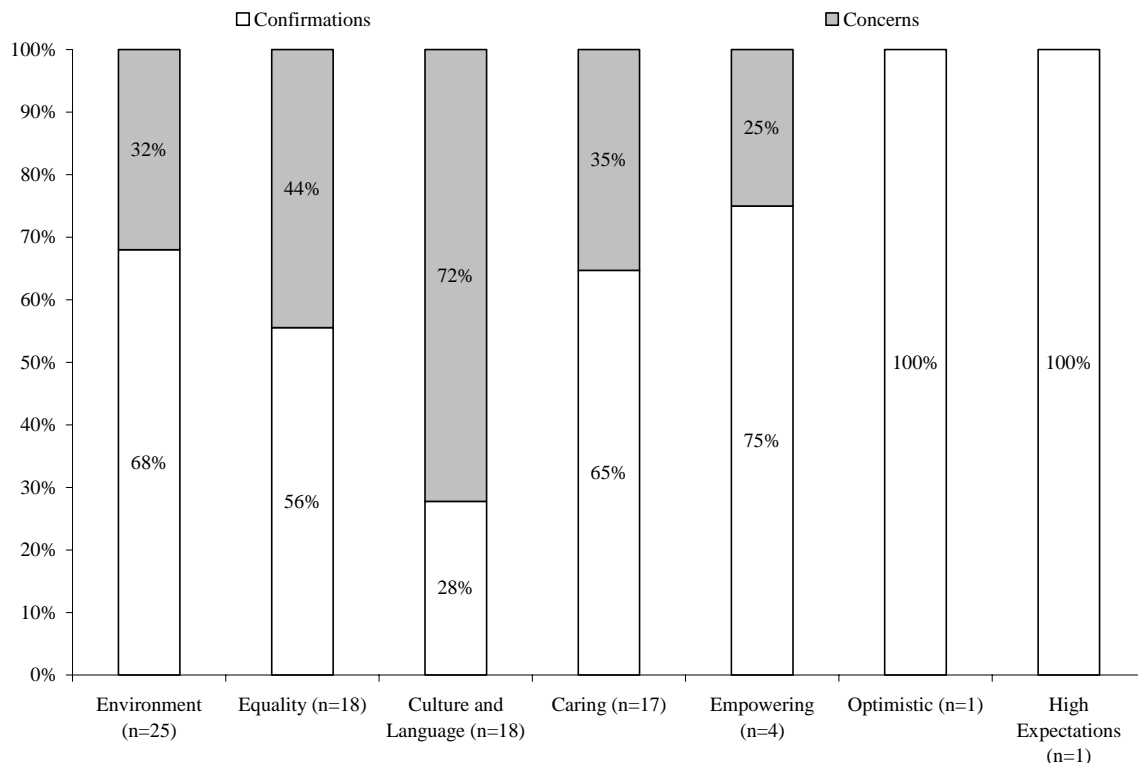


**Figure 42. Distribution of coded parent confirmations and concerns regarding the components of the district, school, and classroom climate attribute.**

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*Parent Perceptions of Program Articulation*

The parents perceived program articulation as the third most prevalent attribute of an effective elementary bilingual education program. This attribute was comprised of six components that were identified from previous research on effective elementary bilingual education programs. These components included:

a) the development and maintenance of clearly articulated roles and responsibilities;
b) dynamic two-way communication;
c) focused and sustained supports between central office and school-level staff;
d) strong leadership, credibility, and respect;
e) a common program of instruction that is properly scoped, sequenced, and articulated across grade levels; and
f) a program of instruction that has been aligned with developmentally appropriate practices and student language proficiency levels in English and the students' first language.

Parents at almost all of the campuses (88%) perceived that an effective program of instruction for English Language Learners must be aligned with developmentally appropriate practices and student language proficiency levels in English and the students' first language. Parents at almost all of the campuses (88%) also perceived that dynamic two-way communication was important. Parents at less than half of the campuses (38%) perceived the importance of a common program of instruction that is properly scoped, sequenced, and articulated across grade levels.

Parents at one quarter of the campuses (25%) perceived that it was essential to develop and provide strong leadership, credibility, and respect for the program. Parents at a few campuses (13%) perceived the importance of focused and sustained supports between central office and school-level staff. None of the parents perceived the importance of the development and maintenance of clearly articulated roles and

responsibilities. Figure 43 provides a graphical representation of the distribution of campuses where parents perceived a component of the program articulation attribute.
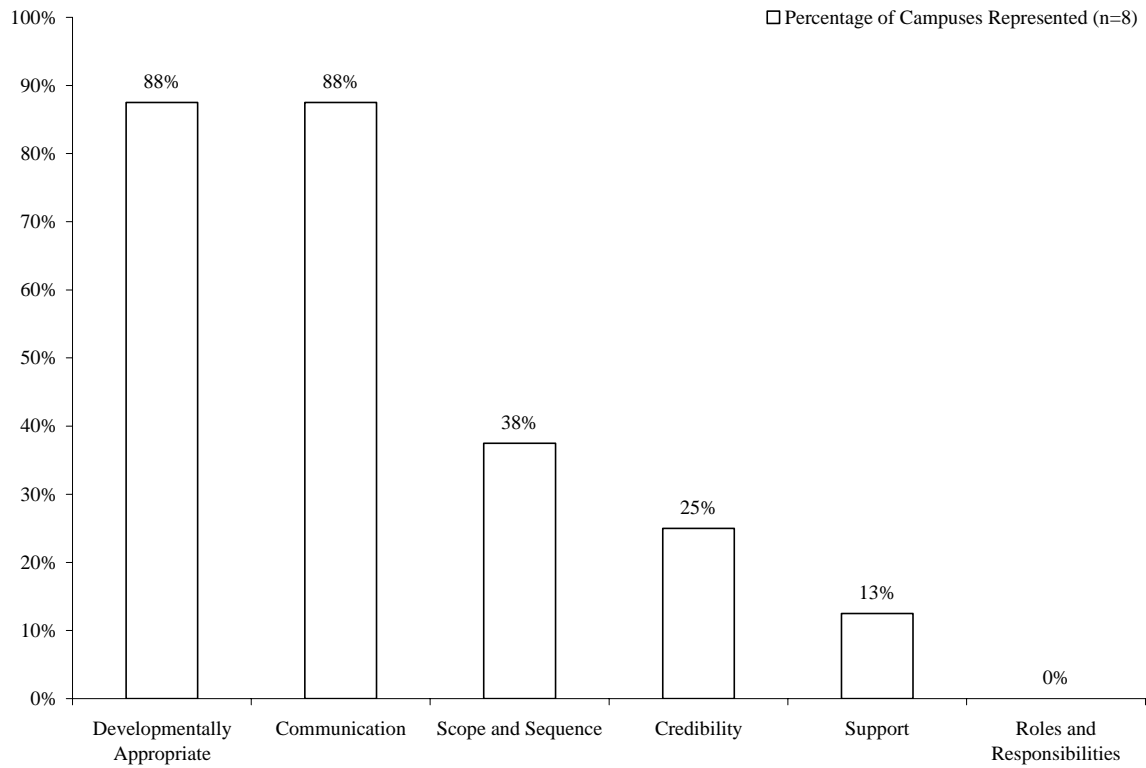


**Figure 43. Distribution of coded parent confirmations and concerns regarding the components of the program articulation attribute.**

As shown in Figure 42, parents at almost all of the campuses mentioned the importance of an elementary bilingual education program that is aligned with developmentally appropriate practices and student language proficiency levels in English and the students' first language.

One of the parent confirmations regarding the developmental appropriateness of the

elementary bilingual education program included:

> My son brings home homework and the homework is in Spanish. He gets to his level in math he continues his work on addition and subtraction and we tell him a story. Although his English is limited, he feels that he is learning he is applying the little bit that he knows to the level of his academics. It is very interesting to notice his writing skills for English is very low. When you give him the option to write in Spanish he really goes.

Another parent mentioned, "Another good thing that I think the bilingual teachers are

doing well is that they encourage reading in both English and Spanish. That happened to

both of my children." Conversely, one of the parent concerns regarding the

developmental appropriateness of the elementary bilingual education program included:

> I think that some schools try to pressure students to transition from the bilingual program to English as soon as possible. When to me, I think more of the individual student who will lose Spanish the more quickly he is moved.

Another parent commented, "For the youngest they learn best in their native language. It

seems that in this school they do not do that program."

Parents at almost all of the campuses also mentioned that dynamic, two-way

communication was an important component of an effective elementary bilingual

program. One of the parent confirmations about communication included:

> The teacher lets you know if there is something wrong and we come to the school to talk to her. She sends messages through my son. That is the way she keeps in touch everyday. Yes, everyday there are notes.

Another parent mentioned:

> The communication is very important to have to stay in touch with teachers. It has worked very well for me in having very good communication and thank God, I have not had problems. Most of the communication is by notes back and forth.

On the other hand, one of the parent concerns about communication included:

> There was a notebook that our kids were encouraged to buy at the beginning of the year. I wish my son's teacher was making more use of this workbook. My son does not write his homework in there and the teacher never makes comments. That notebook was just a waste of money.

Another parent commented, "I wish they would call me over the phone to tell me how my kids are doing, because I do not know how they are doing. More contact over the telephone."

Parents at some of the campuses also mentioned that it was important for the elementary bilingual education program to be properly scoped, sequenced, and articulated across grade levels. One of the parent confirmations about the scope and sequence included, "I want Spanish and English to be at the same level of academic content. In school, they have all of the resources, there is no reason why the kids should not learn, they have everything." On the contrary, one of the parent concerns about the scope and sequence included, "The teachers have a curriculum and during this period, this is what they are going to teach. Sometimes they can only do what they are supposed to do according to the curriculum."

Parents at two of the campuses mentioned the importance of strong leadership, credibility, and respect. There were no parent confirmations regarding the level of credibility and respect. One of the parent concerns included:

> It seems as though the principal dictates the way the teacher has to run the classes. For example, if you are going to teach multiplication, they are told to use one methodology, which seems wrong, because the teacher may need to utilize several different methodologies.

Another parent mentioned, "The teacher told me that my child has been late many times. The teacher gets here at 8:30! She needs to teach by example first and then she can demand."

While the parents shared a range of opinions regarding the components of the program articulation attribute, the overall perception of this attribute was concerning. While the majority of the parent perceptions of the communication component were confirmations (65%), the majority of the parent perceptions of the rest of the components were concerns. Figure 44 graphically presents the distribution of coded parent confirmations and concerns regarding the components of the program articulation attribute.
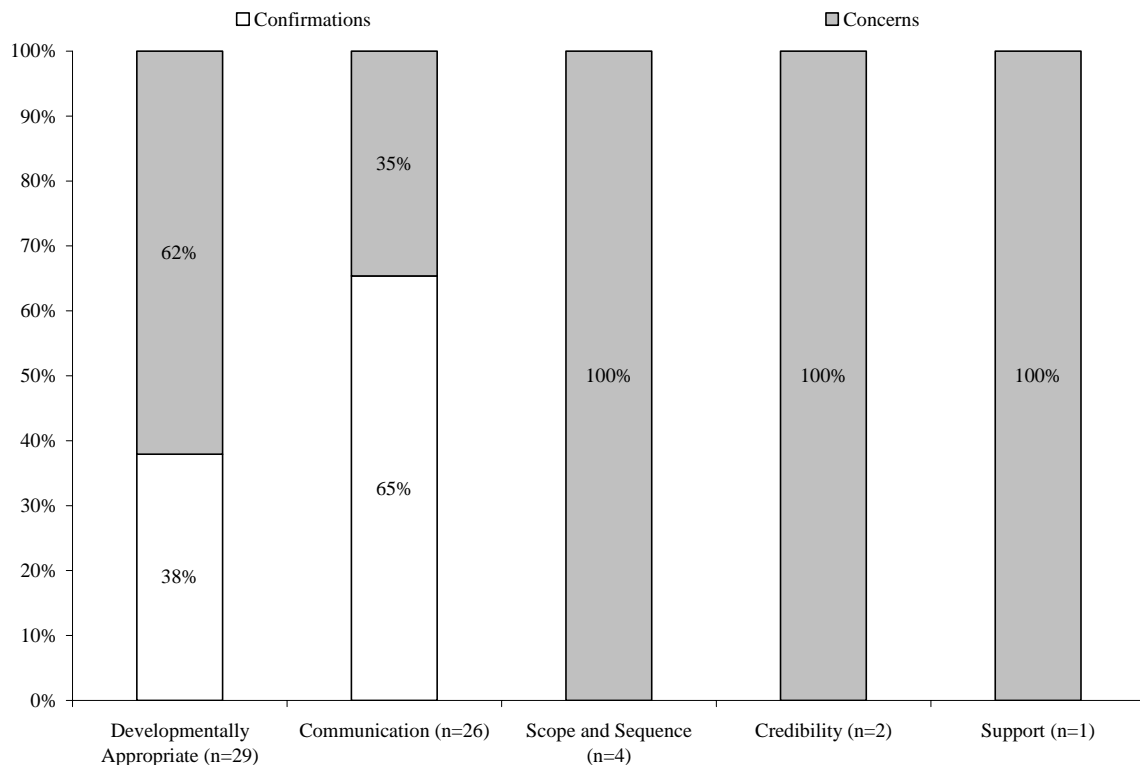


**Figure 44. Distribution of coded parent confirmations and concerns regarding the components of the program articulation attribute.**

*Parent Perceptions of Emergent Themes*

Taken as a whole, the parents perceived the emergent themes as the fourth most prevalent attribute of an effective elementary bilingual education program. This attribute was composed of eight themes that emerged from the parent focus group interviews. These emergent themes included:

a) funding,
b) materials,
c) staffing,
d) class size,
e) translation of materials,
f) socioeconomic status,
g) educational systems, and
h) homework.

Parents at most of the campuses (75%) perceived that homework was an important part of an effective elementary bilingual education program. Parents at more than half of the campuses (63%) perceived that the translation of materials was important. Parents at half of the campuses (50%) perceived that class size was an important factor. Parents at less than half of the campuses (38%) perceived that materials and funding were important. Parents at one quarter of the campuses (25%) perceived that educational systems was an important factor. Parents at a few campuses (13%) perceived that staffing and socioeconomic status were factors in an effective elementary bilingual education program. Figure 45 provides a graphical representation of the distribution of campuses where parents perceived an emergent theme.
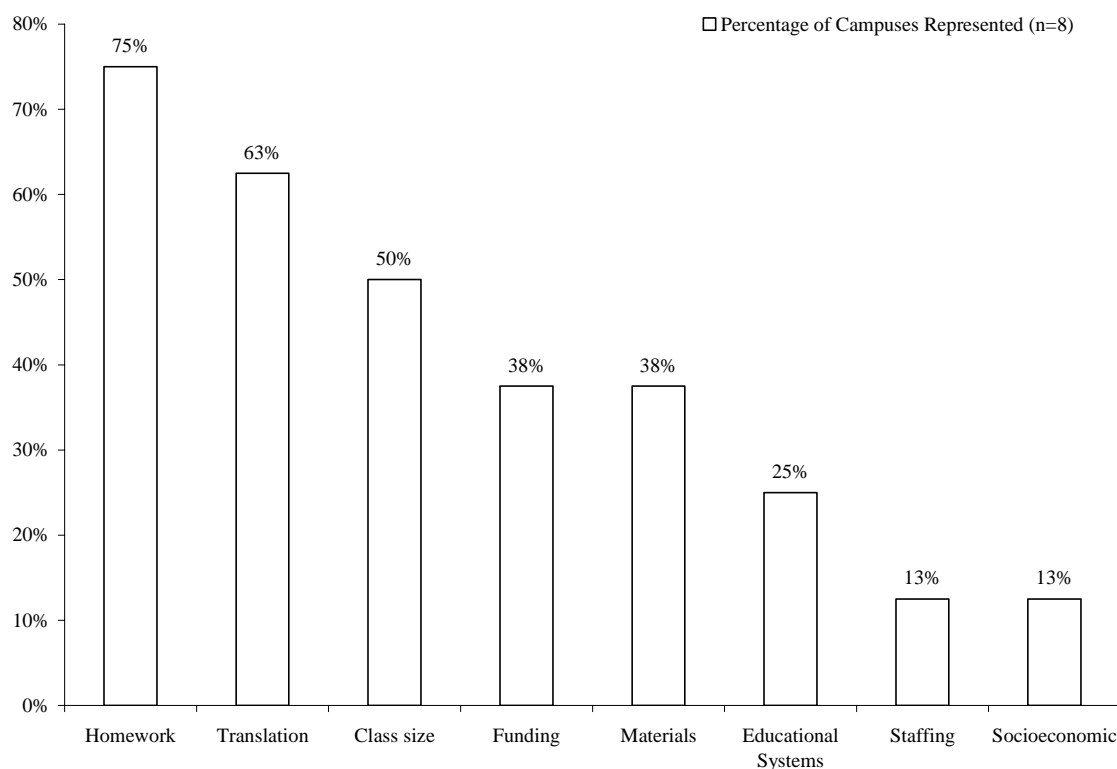
**Figure 45. Distribution of campuses where parents perceived an emergent theme.**

As shown in Figure 45, parents at most of the campuses mentioned homework.

One of the parent confirmations included:

> To do her work, my daughter needs to study more than the regular homework. There are some teachers who are afraid that parents get upset because they send home too much homework. I told the teacher that nothing bad is going to happen to them. In order for my child to get better, she needs to do a lot of homework.

Conversely, one of the parent concerns included, "One more thing that I would like to say is that Spanish teachers send home a lot of homework compared to the English teachers. The kids have to spend all afternoon doing their homework and on the weekends, too."

Parents at many of the campuses mentioned the translation of materials. One of the parent confirmations included, "Having a translator at each bilingual school is very important as opposed to having individual teachers translate because you can be a teacher

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that is bilingual but not an academically bilingual teacher. It is another level of bilingualism." On the contrary, one of the parent concerns included, "Everything we receive is in English. I would like to receive a newsletter in Spanish."

Parents at most of the campuses mentioned the importance of the alignment and timing of resources, the quantity and quality of equipment and materials, and the allocation of staff to the effectiveness of an elementary bilingual education program. One of the parent confirmations included, "The dual language program, I think, is really helping our child. The grant money that helped to set up the program is very important." Another parent mentioned, "Instructional materials and books are good for our children." On the other hand, one of the parent concerns included, "There are not enough teachers and there are really not enough bilingual teachers." Another parent commented, "We need help with the cost of the classes."

Parents at some of the campuses mentioned the differences between the education systems of the United States and Mexico. One of the parent confirmations included, "We come from Mexico and we have a different way of learning and doing things. I had to learn the different system, how things are done with my daughter, and her grades went up. This is the only way." Another parent mentioned, "I think it different there because there is only one language. Here they are teaching in two languages."

However, one of the parent concerns included:

> I think the bilingual program should go back to the original program. In Mexico, by first grade, the kids already know the multiplication tables that they do not learn until the third grade here. What is happening? What is the matter?

Another parent commented:

> In math and division, they do totally different things. People in Mexico are way ahead than what they are doing here. They go to school fewer hours. In history they know more because they know world history. In math too they are ahead.

While the parents shared a range of opinions regarding the emergent themes, the overall perception was confirming. While the majority of the parent perceptions of the homework (94%), educational systems (67%), and translation of materials (83%) themes were concerns, the majority of the parent perceptions of the rest of the themes were confirmations. Figure 46 graphically presents the distribution of coded parent confirmations and concerns regarding the emergent themes.
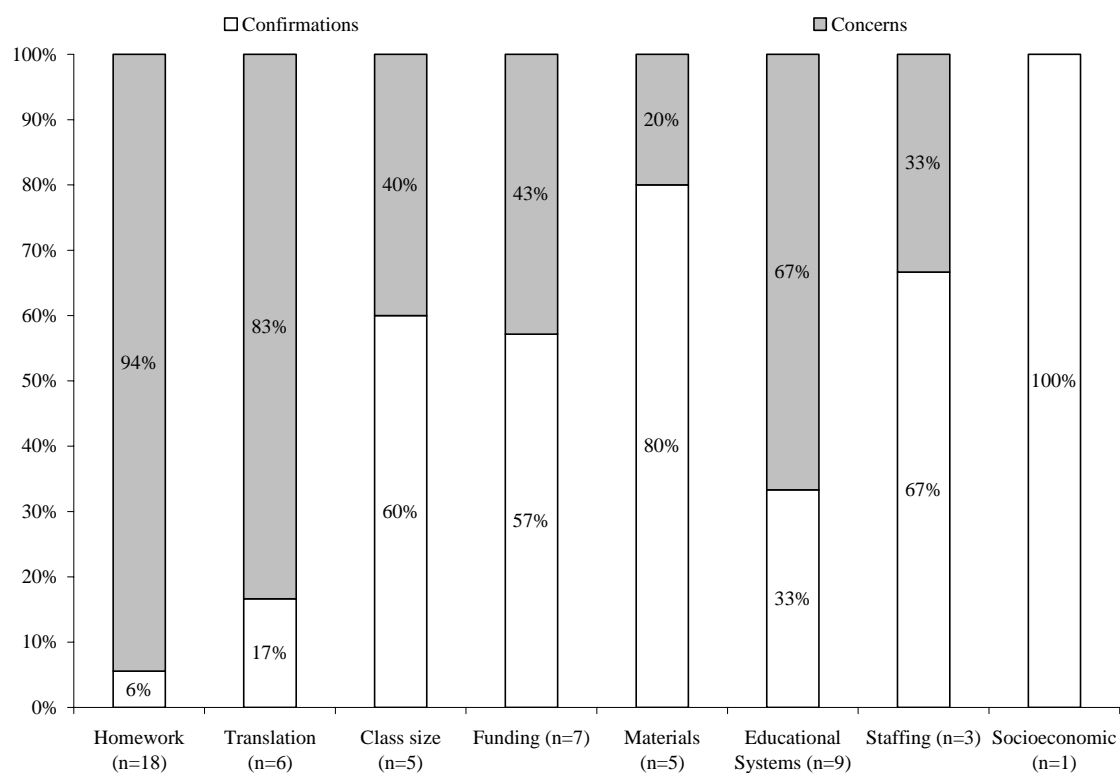
**Figure 46. Distribution of coded parent confirmations and concerns regarding the emergent themes.**

*Parent Perceptions of Curriculum and Instruction*

The parents perceived curriculum and instruction as the third least prevalent

attribute of an effective elementary bilingual education program. This attribute was

comprised of 11 components that were identified from previous research on effective

elementary bilingual education programs. These components included:

a) emphasizing functional communication between teachers and students and among fellow students;
b) organizing the instruction of skills and academic content around thematic units;
c) promoting frequent student interaction through collaborative learning techniques;
d) supplementing explicit skills instruction with student-directed activities such as cooperative learning, partner reading, and collaborative inquiry;
e) promoting high expectations for all students;
f) creating active learning environments that are meaningful, technologically appropriate, and academically challenging;
g) using a variety of innovative instructional techniques that respond to different learning styles;
h) seeking an educationally productive balance between commonality and diversity in heterogeneous schools and classrooms;
i) promoting a philosophy of curriculum and instruction that capitalizes on the strengths of each child;
j) viewing cultural ways of learning as resources rather than deficits; and
a) making change a clearly defined, focused, and manageable process.

Parents at most of the campuses (75%) perceived that active learning

environments that were meaningful, technologically appropriate, and academically

challenging were part of an effective elementary bilingual education program. Parents at

most of the campuses (75%) also perceived that using a variety of innovative

instructional techniques that respond to different learning styles was important. Parents at

less than half of the campuses (38%) perceived the importance of promoting high

expectations for all students. Parents at less than half of the campuses (38%) also

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perceived that promoting frequent student interaction through collaborative learning techniques was important.

Parents at one quarter of the campuses (25%) perceived the importance of placing an emphasis on functional communication between teachers and students and among fellow students. Parents at one quarter of the campuses (25%) also perceived that a philosophy of curriculum and instruction that capitalizes on the strengths of each child was important. Parents at a few campuses (13%) perceived that an educationally productive balance between commonality and diversity in heterogeneous schools and classrooms was a part of an effective elementary bilingual education program. None of the parents perceived the student-centered, cultural learning, thematic units, or change agent components. Figure 47 provides a graphical representation of the distribution of campuses where parents perceived a component of the curriculum and instruction attribute.
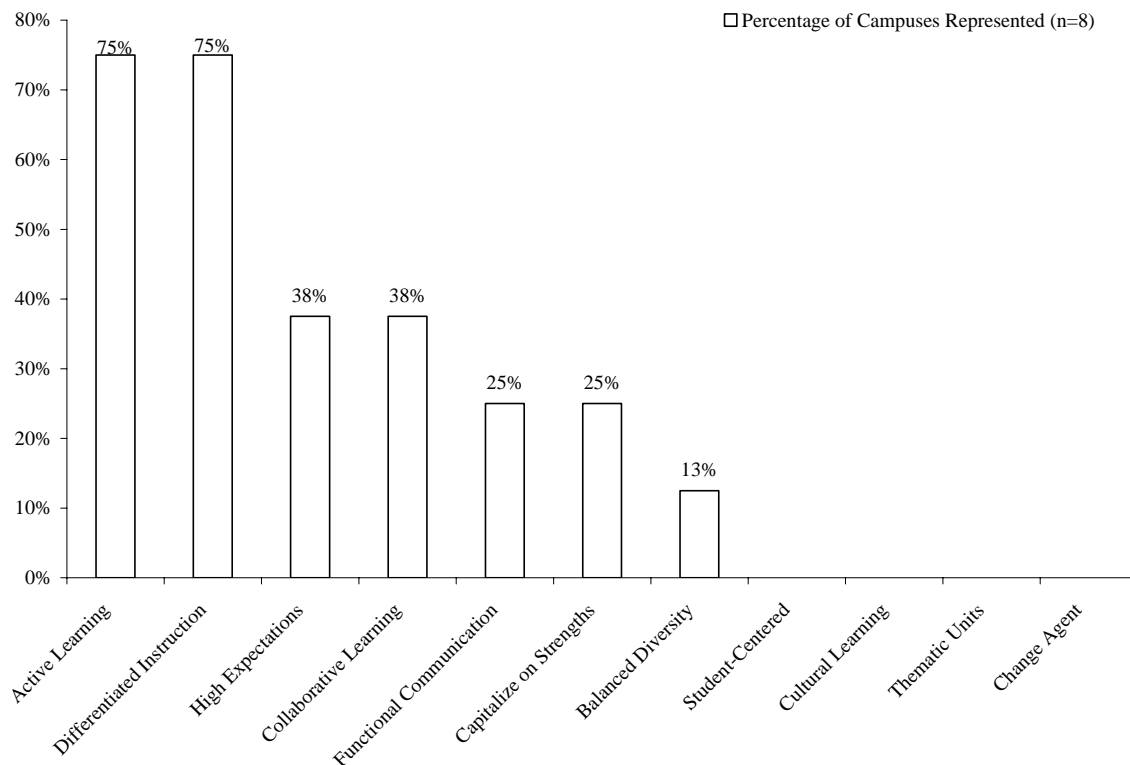
**Figure 47. Distribution of campuses where parents perceived a component of the curriculum and instruction attribute.**

As shown in Figure 47, parents at most of the campuses mentioned the importance of active learning environments that are meaningful, technologically appropriate, and academically challenging. One of the parent confirmations included, "My children really like the hands-on research." On the other hand, one of the parent concerns included:

> I do not see the value in these homework sheet activities. I would prefer to have a project with very clear guidelines, you know, give us two weeks or a month to do it, and we will turn it in.

Parents at most of the campuses also mentioned the importance of instruction that is innovative and uses a variety of techniques that respond to different learning styles.

One of the parent confirmations included:

> I think it is very important to take time with the individual child. Take time with children individually not cookie cutter. You know, not every child may be ready to read by this time. It needs to go back on the actual individual child.

Conversely, one of the parent concerns included:

> Art and music are not getting the priority. It is an important release for kids and although it is part of the state curriculum. I wish there was more of an emphasis on letting the children be creative and do art projects.

Parents at some of the campuses mentioned the importance of promoting frequent student interaction through collaborative learning techniques. One of the parent confirmations included, "The teacher has my son help other students with material that he knows. She calls him a leader and asks him to help her." On the contrary, one of the parent concerns included, "When teachers are absent and the children watch TV all day long, is that education?"

While the parents shared a range of opinions regarding the components of the curriculum and instruction attribute, the overall perception of this attribute was confirming. For instance, the parents perceived high expectations (100%), collaborative learning (100%), and balanced diversity (100%) as the most confirming components and capitalize on strengths (50%) as the least confirming component. Figure 48 graphically presents the distribution of coded parent confirmations and concerns regarding the components of the curriculum and instruction attribute.
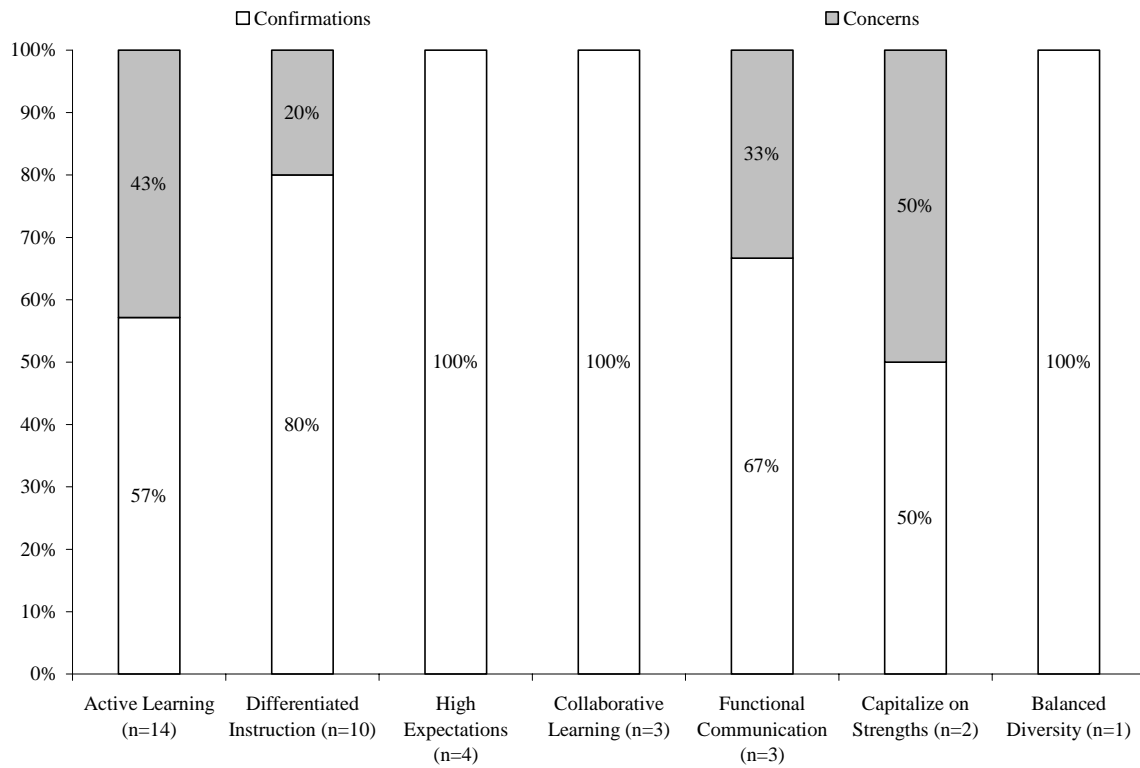
**Figure 48. Distribution of coded parent confirmations and concerns regarding the components of the curriculum and instruction attribute.**

*Parent Perceptions of Quality People*

The parents perceived quality people as the second least prevalent attribute of an

effective elementary bilingual education program. This attribute was comprised of six

components that were identified from previous research on effective elementary bilingual

education programs. These components included:

a) screening teacher applicants to ensure full written and oral proficiency in both
   languages;
b) fully credentialed bilingual and English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers
   continuously acquiring new knowledge regarding best practices in curriculum,
   instruction, and assessment;
c) all educators receiving appropriate training in the students' native language
d) all teachers in the school regularly receiving information about bilingual
   education, the use of data, ESL strategies, and students' cultural and linguistic
   characteristics that serve as assets to their academic success;
e) examining the distribution of teachers with varying levels of education,
   experience, and certification; and
f) improving recruitment, placement, professional development, and evaluation
   processes.

Parents at most of the campuses (75%) perceived that fully credentialed bilingual

and ESL teachers continuously acquiring new knowledge regarding best practices in

curriculum, instruction, and assessment was part of an effective elementary bilingual

education program. Parents at half of the campuses (50%) perceived the importance of

screening teacher applicants to ensure full written and oral proficiency in both languages.

Parents at half of the campuses (50%) also perceived that the improvement of

recruitment, placement, professional development, and evaluation processes was

important. Parents at less than half of the campuses (38%) perceived that all educators

receiving appropriate training in the students' native language was an important part of

an effective elementary bilingual education program. None of the parents mentioned the

monolingual teachers or equity audits components. Figure 49 provides a graphical

representation of the distribution of campuses where parents perceived a component of

the quality people attribute.
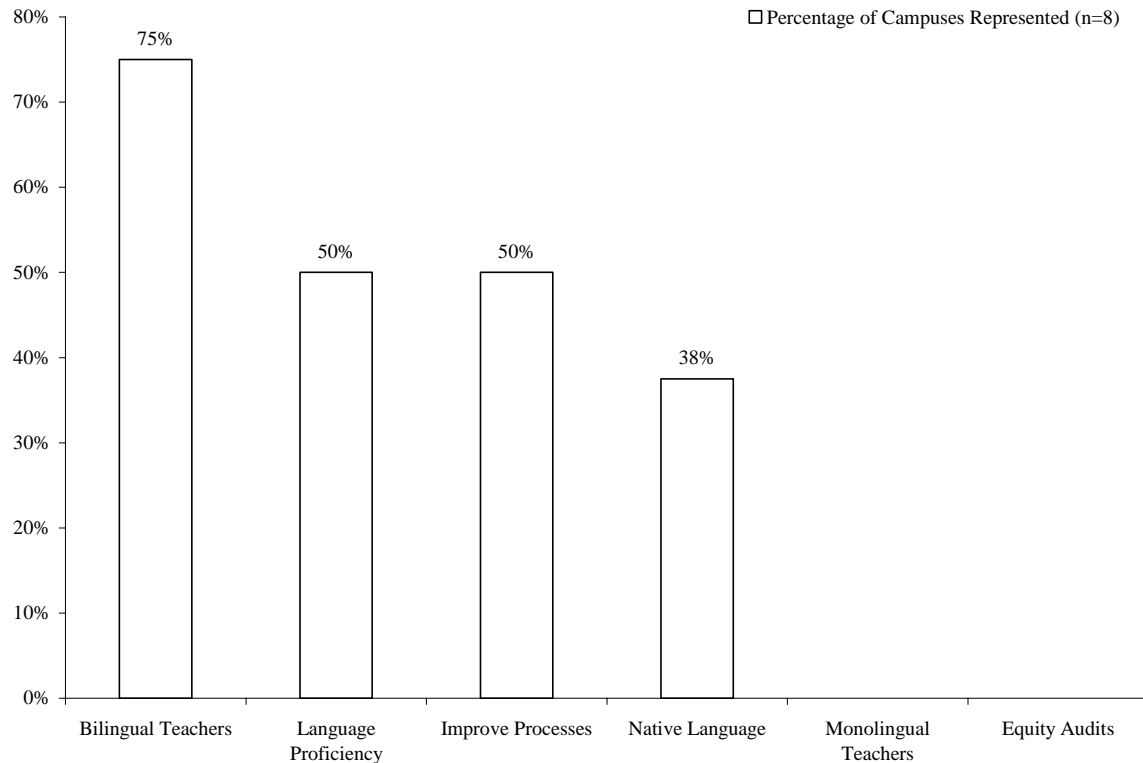


**Figure 49. Distribution of campuses where parents perceived a component of the quality people attribute.**

As shown in Figure 49, parents at most of the campuses mentioned the

importance of fully credentialed bilingual and ESL teachers continuously acquiring new

knowledge regarding best practices in curriculum, instruction, and assessment. One of the

parent confirmations included, "Teachers are the number one things that contributes to

the success of my child." On the other hand, one of the parent concerns included,

"Bilingual teachers are not as well prepared as the non-bilingual teacher. They believe

that just being bilingual is all they need and they need more education, the same way any other teacher does."

Parents at half of the campuses mentioned the importance of screening teacher applicants to ensure full written and oral proficiency in both languages. There were no parent confirmations regarding the importance of bilingual teachers who are fluent in both languages. One of the parent concerns included:

> My daughter had a teacher in second grade who was an American who spoke Spanish. My daughter wanted to speak English but the teacher only spoke in Spanish. The teacher did not speak Spanish well and I had to correct my daughter's Spanish at home all of the time.

Another parent mentioned, "The teachers need to improve their Spanish. In many cases, they do not have a very good vocabulary and so they try to convert or translate Spanish words into English words that are not correct or exact."

Parents at half of the campuses also mentioned the importance of improving recruitment, placement, professional development, and evaluation processes. One of the parent confirmations included, "I think the district is good. I have been in other districts that are worse. The district is finding more teachers and more classrooms are being built. I think the district is doing a good job." Conversely, one of the parent concerns included, "The school does not seem to have a lot of bilingual teachers."

While the parents shared a range of opinions regarding the components of the quality people attribute, the overall perception of this attribute was confirming. For instance, the parents perceived improve processes (75%) as the most confirming component and bilingual teachers (50%) as the least confirming component. Figure 50

graphically presents the distribution of coded parent confirmations and concerns

regarding the components of the quality people attribute.
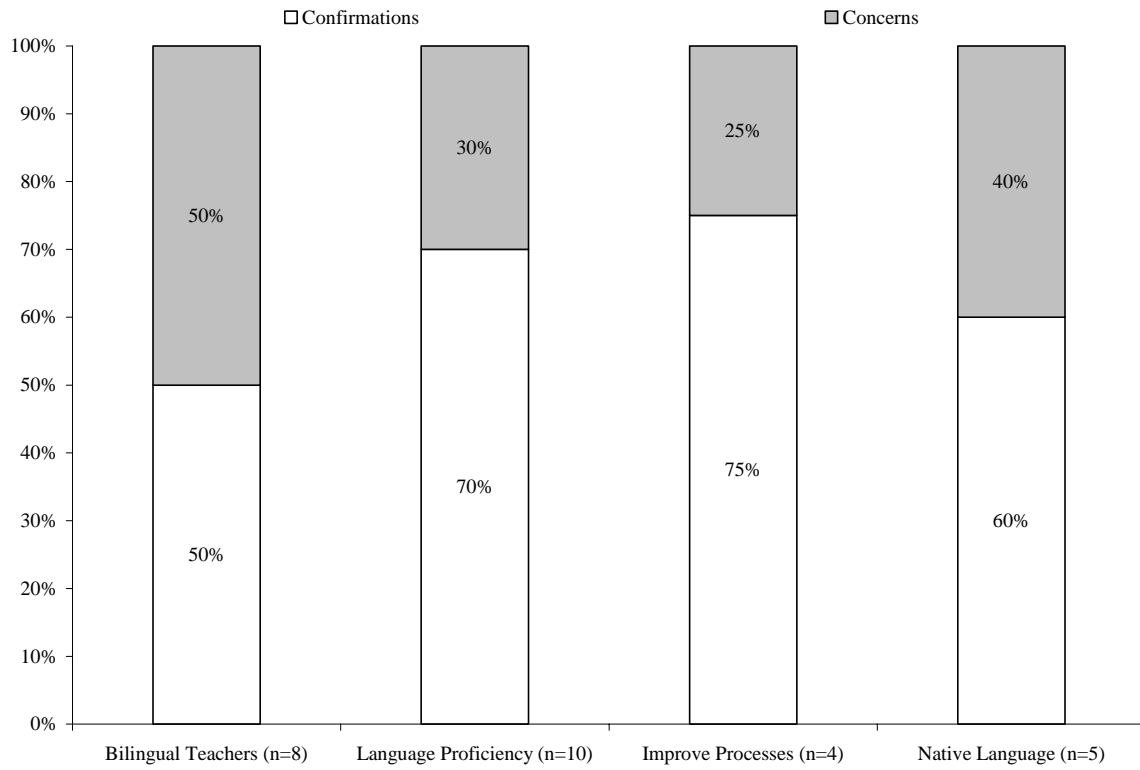


**Figure 50. Distribution of coded parent confirmations and concerns regarding the components of the quality people attribute.**

*Parent Perceptions of Leadership, Vision, and Goals*

The parents perceived leadership, vision, and goals, along with organization, accountability, and assessment, as the least prevalent attribute of an effective elementary bilingual education program. This attribute was comprised of 12 components that were identified from previous research on effective elementary bilingual education programs. These components included leaders who:

a) are well informed of the rationale for bilingual education;
b) share an active commitment to bilingualism;
c) proactively involve teachers, the community, and the private sector in the design and development of the bilingual program;
d) are open to innovation;
e) create a vision and set of goals with the school community;
f) define high expectations of all students;
g) publish and disseminate high expectations so that staff, parents, and students can articulate the purpose of the school in their own words;
h) are aware of the social, political, and economic forces that interact in the educational arena;
i) raise questions about the systems, organizational frameworks, and leadership theories that privilege certain groups and/or perspectives over others;
j) challenge oppression in all forms;
k) encourage culturally and linguistically different students to find and use their individual and collective voices; and
l) transform schools from being sorting mechanisms for the larger global market to being institutions of hope and social change.

Parents at more than half of the campuses (63%) perceived the importance of leaders proactively involving teachers, the community, and the private sector in the design and development of an effective elementary bilingual education program. Parents at one quarter of the schools (25%) perceived that it was important for leaders to publish and disseminate information so that staff, parents, and students can articulate the purpose of the school in their own words. Parents at less than one third of the campuses (13%) perceived that it was important to create a vision and set of goals with the school

community and define high expectations of all students. Parents at less than one third of

the campuses (13%) also perceived that leaders who were well informed of the rationale

for bilingual education and shared an active commitment to bilingualism were important.

Parents at less than one third of the campuses (13%) perceived that it was important for

leaders to raise questions about the systems, organizational frameworks, and leadership

theories that privilege certain groups and/or perspectives over others. None of the parents

perceived the importance of innovation, student voice, transformational leadership,

awareness of interacting forces, or challenging oppression. Figure 51 provides a graphical

representation of the distribution of campuses where parents perceived a component of

the leadership, vision, and goals attribute.
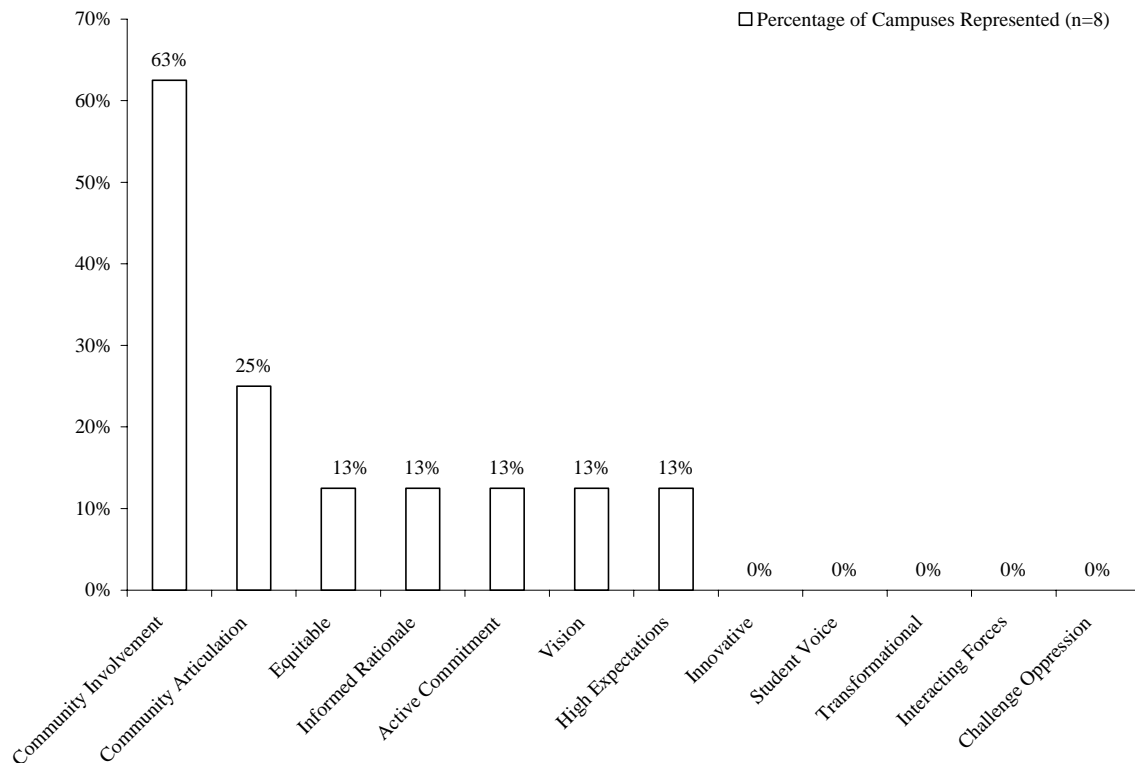


**Figure 51. Distribution of campuses where parents perceived a component of the leadership, vision, and goals attribute.**

As shown in Figure 51, parents at more than half of the schools mentioned that it was important to involve teachers, the community, and the private sector proactively in the design and development of an effective elementary bilingual program. One of the parent confirmations included, "This principal seems to be more involved with the kids and parents. The principal from before, I never saw. This one, you see a lot." On the other hand, one of the parent concerns included, "I have no contact with the principal. I have not come to the meetings. I do not know her."

Parents at one quarter of the schools mentioned that it was important for the leadership to publish and disseminate high expectations so that staff, parents, and students can articulate the purpose of the elementary bilingual education program in their own words. There were no parent confirmations regarding the dissemination of information about the elementary bilingual education program. One of the parent concerns included:

> I would like to see more English. It seems that the teacher wants to make sure that they understand their native language and they need to work on English more. When my kids started school, I was asked if my child wanted English or bilingual. I thought that bilingual meant two languages, but it was never explained to me that it would only be until third grade that they would start English.

Another parent mentioned, "I wish that there were a person that would have explained to us the program and provided us with some materials about the program. I wish that they had done that before. Proactive not reactive."

While the parents shared a range of opinions regarding the components of the leadership, vision, and goals attribute, the overall perception of this attribute was concerning. While the majority of parent perceptions of the active commitment (100%)

and high expectations (100%) components were confirmations, the majority of the parent

perceptions of the rest of the components were concerns. Figure 52 graphically presents

the distribution of coded parent confirmations and concerns regarding the components of

the leadership, vision, and goals attribute.
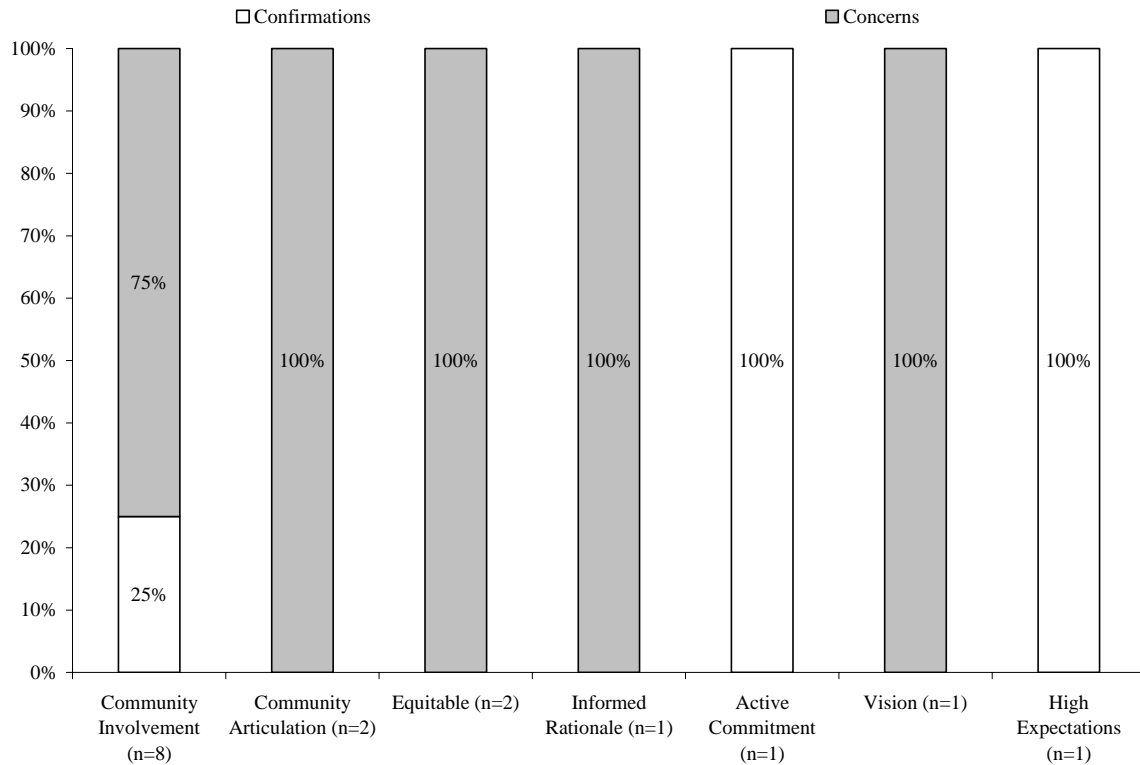


**Figure 52. Distribution of coded parent confirmations and concerns regarding the components of the leadership, vision, and goals attribute.**

*Parent Perceptions of Organization, Accountability, and Assessment*

The parents perceived organization, accountability, and assessment, along with

leadership, vision, and goals, as the least prevalent attribute of an effective elementary

bilingual education program. This attribute was comprised of four components that were

identified from previous research on effective elementary bilingual education programs.

These components included:

a) systematic assessment of student achievement informs ongoing efforts to improve academic success,
b) the elementary bilingual education program is an integral part of the district and campus academic plan and is widely respected by the administration,
c) there is strong accountability for the success of all students, and
d) data is used appropriately.

Parents at more than half of the campuses (63%) perceived that strong

accountability for the success of all students was an important part of an effective

elementary bilingual education program. Parents at less than half of the campuses (38%)

perceived that it was important for the systematic assessment of student achievement to

inform ongoing efforts. None of the parents mentioned the integrity or appropriate use

components. Figure 53 provides a graphical representation of the distribution of

campuses where parents perceived a component of the organization, accountability, and

assessment attribute.
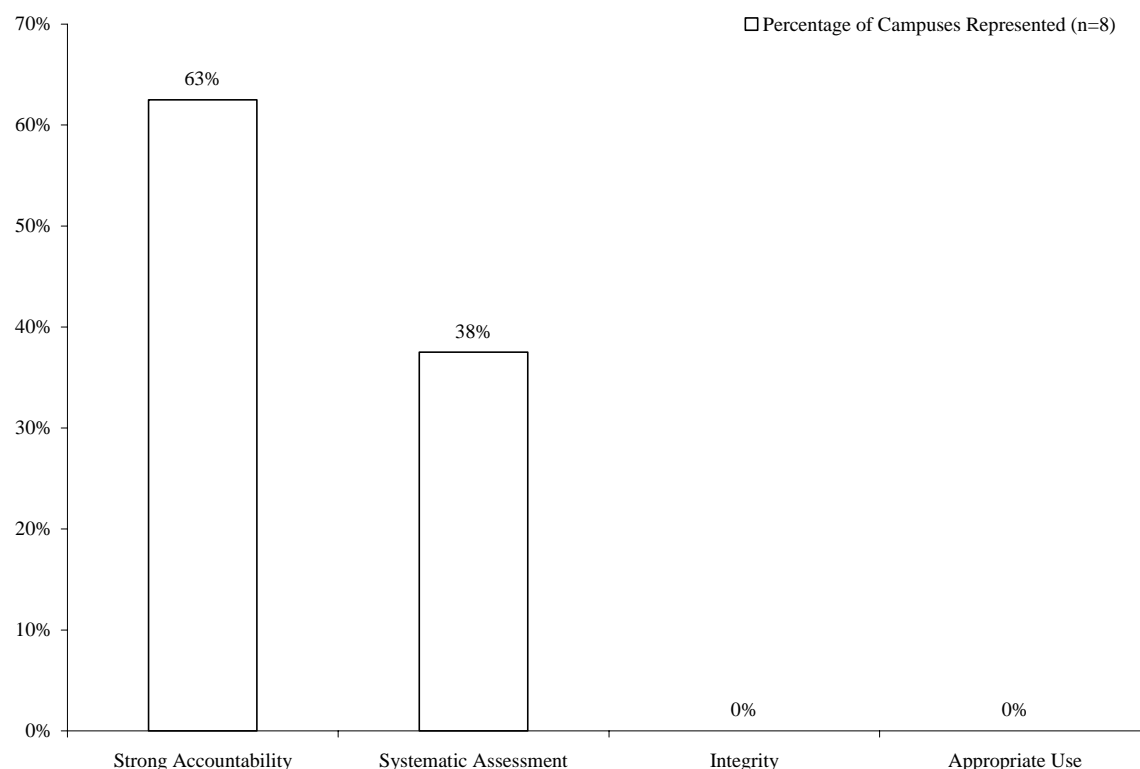
**Figure 53. Distribution of campuses where parents perceived a component of the organization, accountability, and assessment attribute.**

As shown in Figure 53, parents at more than half of the schools mentioned that it was important to have strong accountability for the success of all students in an effective elementary bilingual education program. One of the parent concerns included:

> They will just be strict and demanding but just because they have to reach some goals. They should be applying their methods because they know it will work at some point as a teaching tool. They should be strict to improve the child not to pass the test.

Another parent mentioned:

> The district should not pressure the children so much. They start preparing six months in advance. They do not take into consideration anything that the child has done before. It is simply the single grade or single result of the TAKS test. If they fail, then they fail and nothing else is taken into consideration.

Parents at some of the schools mentioned that it was important to have systematic assessment of student achievement to inform ongoing efforts to improve academic success. One of the parent confirmations included, "I think the students are benchmarked well. From what I have seen they seem to be on an appropriate level." On the other hand, one of the parent concerns included:

> The TAKS exam! Every single day they are reading, reading, reading. They want to grade math to find out what they know so they can figure out what to teach them. Everyone failed the math benchmark. I asked my daughter what she failed in, what did you fail in fractions? The teacher has not taught us fractions and the teacher is giving us the exam.

While the parents shared a range of opinions regarding the components of the organization, accountability, and assessment attribute, the overall perception of this attribute was concerning. For instance, the parent perceived strong accountability (82%) as the most concerning component and systematic (50%) as the least concerning component. Figure 54 graphically presents the distribution of coded parent confirmations and concerns regarding the components of the organization, accountability, and assessment attribute.
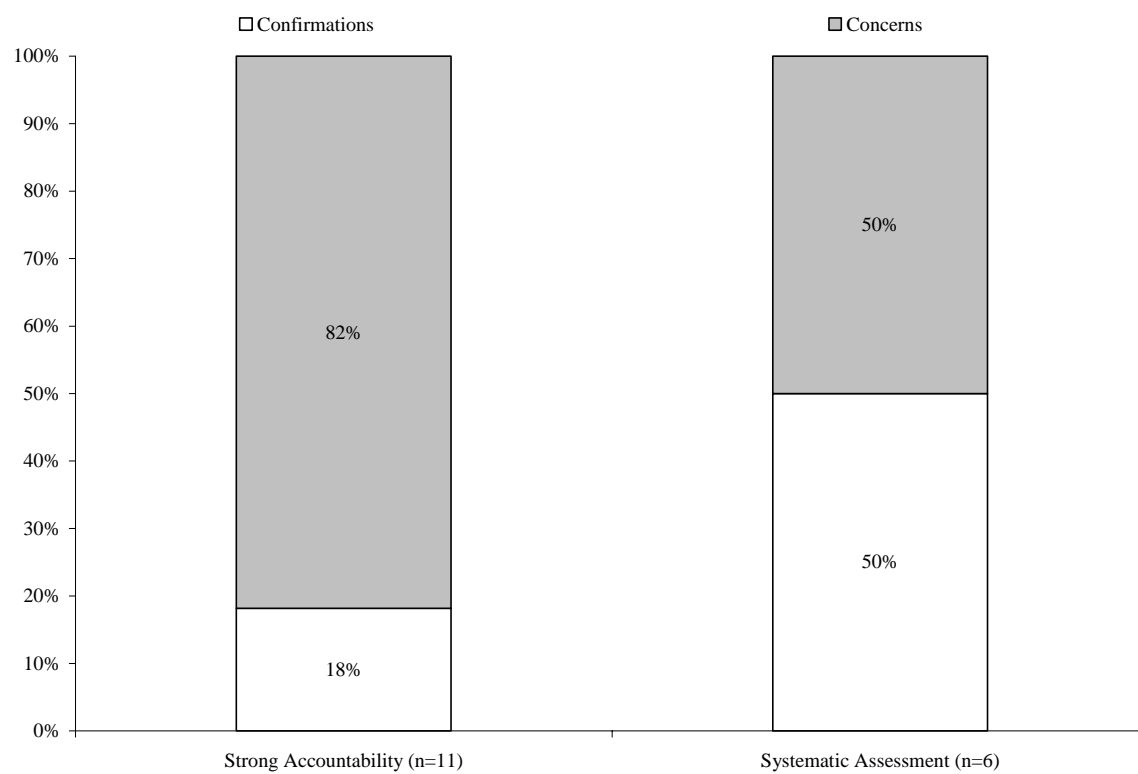
**Figure 54. Distribution of coded parent confirmations and concerns regarding the components of the organization, accountability, and assessment attribute.**

How are the perceived attributes similar or different

between administrators, teachers, and parents?

The first section of this chapter presented the perceived attributes and emergent themes of an effective elementary bilingual education program from each administrator, teacher, and parent group. The second section of this chapter presents the similarities and differences of the perceived attributes and emergent themes between the administrator, teacher, and parent groups. The presentation begins with the overall distribution of the perceived attributes and emergent themes. This is followed with a presentation of the similarities and differences between the groups of participants that is organized by the perceived attributes and emergent themes. All of the attributes and emergent themes are holistically combined to provide a comprehensive framework through which the perceptions of the administrators, teachers, and parents are examined in Chapter VI.

*Overall Distribution of Perceived Attributes and Emergent Themes*

Each of the seven attributes of effective elementary bilingual education programs that have been identified by researchers in various isolated studies (August & Hakuta, 1998; Howard et al., 2003; Rennie, 1993; Robledo Montecel, Cortez, & Cortez, 2002) were mentioned by administrators, teachers, and parents in this study. These seven attributes included: (a) leadership, vision, and goals; (b) district, school, and classroom climate; (c) program articulation; (d) organization, accountability, and assessment; (e) quality people; (f) parental and community involvement; and (g) curriculum and instruction. Additional themes that emerged from the individual interviews, surveys, and

focus group interviews were also identified by the researcher. The emergent themes included: (a) funding, (b) materials, (c) staffing, (d) class size, (e) translation of materials, (f) socioeconomic status, (g) educational systems, and (h) homework.

When the responses of the administrators, teachers, and parents were combined, program articulation (19%) and parental and community involvement (19%) were perceived as the most prevalent attributes of an effective elementary bilingual education program. Taken as a whole, the emergent themes (14%) were perceived as the second most prevalent attribute. District, school, and classroom climate (13%) was perceived as the third most prevalent attribute while quality people (12%) was perceived as the third least prevalent attribute. Leadership, vision, and goals (10%) and curriculum and instruction (10%) were perceived as the second least prevalent attributes. Organization, accountability, and assessment (4%) was perceived as the least prevalent attribute of an effective elementary bilingual education program when the responses of the administrators, teachers, and parents were combined. Figure 55 provides a graphical representation of the overall distribution of coded responses to perceived attributes and emergent themes.

Organization,
Accountability, and
Assessment
4%

Curriculum and Instruction
10%

Program Articulation
19%

Leadership, Vision, and
Goals
10%

Parental Involvement
19%

Quality People
12%

District, School, and
Classroom Climate
13%

Emergent Themes
14%

n=1760
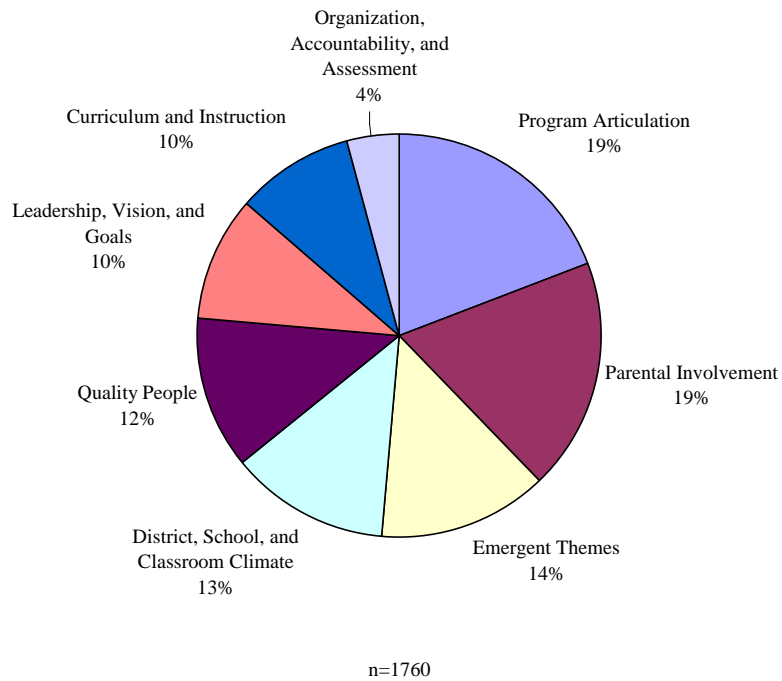
**Figure 55. Overall distribution of coded responses to the perceived attributes and emergent themes for all participants.**

The perceptions were different in that administrators perceived leadership, vision, and goals as the second most prevalent attribute, whereas teachers perceived it as the second least prevalent attribute and parents perceived it as the least prevalent attribute. The perceptions were also different in that parents perceived parental and community involvement as the most prevalent attribute and teachers perceived it as the second most prevalent attribute, whereas administrators perceived it as the third least prevalent attribute. Another difference in the perceptions was that parents perceived district, school, and classroom climate as the second most prevalent attribute whereas teachers and administrators perceived it as the third least prevalent attribute.

The perceptions were similar in that administrators and teachers perceived the program articulation attribute as the most prevalent. The perceptions were also similar in that parents, administrators, and teachers perceived the organization, accountability, and assessment attribute as the least prevalent. Figure 56 provides a graphical representation of the distribution of coded responses to the perceived attributes and emergent themes by participant group.
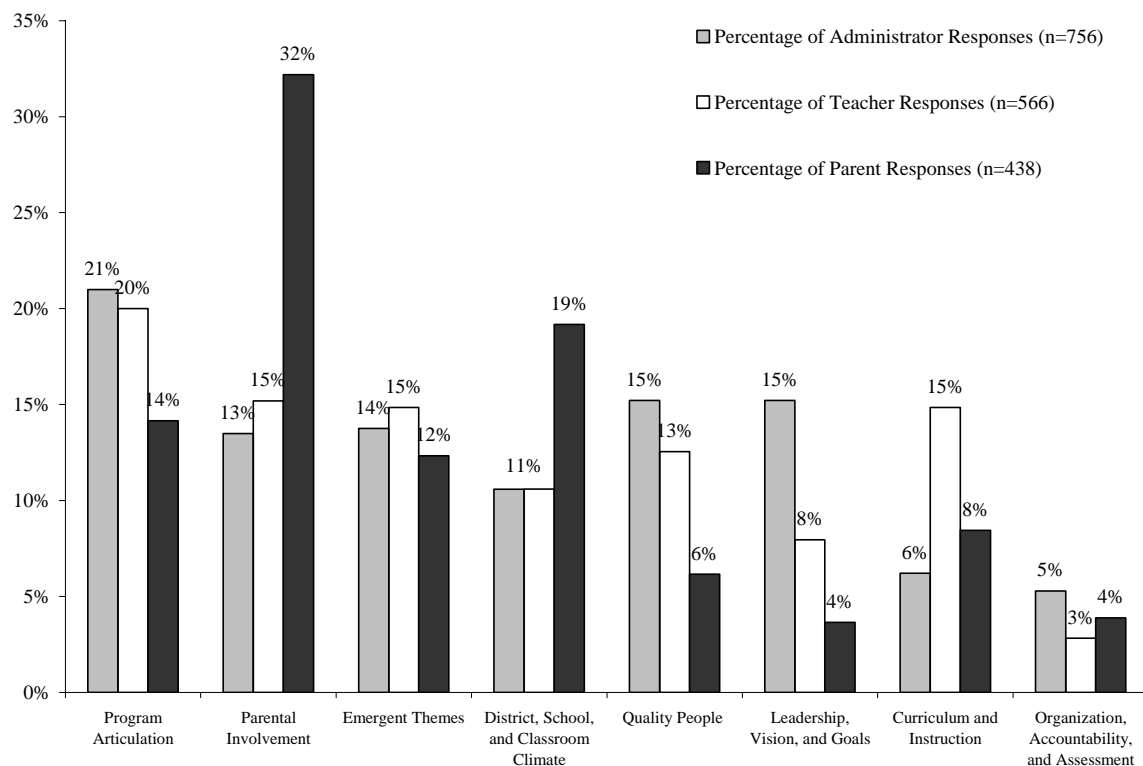


**Figure 56. Distribution of coded responses to the perceived attributes and emergent themes by participant group.**

Each coded response was also labeled as a confirmation or a concern by the researcher. A response was labeled as a confirmation if the attribute or emergent theme was perceived as something that contributed to the success of English Language Learners. A response was labeled as a concern if the attribute or emergent theme was

perceived as something that was either not currently present or not working well in the classroom, school, or district.

The perceptions were similar in that the parental and community involvement, district, school, and classroom climate, quality people, and curriculum and instruction attributes were perceived as mostly confirming by all three groups of participants. The perceptions were also similar in that there were no attributes that were perceived as mostly concerning by all three groups of participants.

The perceptions were different in that the program articulation and leadership, vision, and goals attributes were perceived as mostly confirming by administrators and teachers, while these attributes were perceived as mostly concerning by parents. The perceptions were also different in that the organization, accountability, and assessment attribute and the emergent themes were perceived as mostly concerning by teachers and parents, while administrators perceived the emergent themes and the organization, accountability, and assessment attribute as mostly confirming. Figure 57 graphically presents the distribution of coded confirmations regarding the perceived attributes and emergent themes by participant group. The perceived attributes and emergent themes are presented in the order they were mentioned by all three groups.
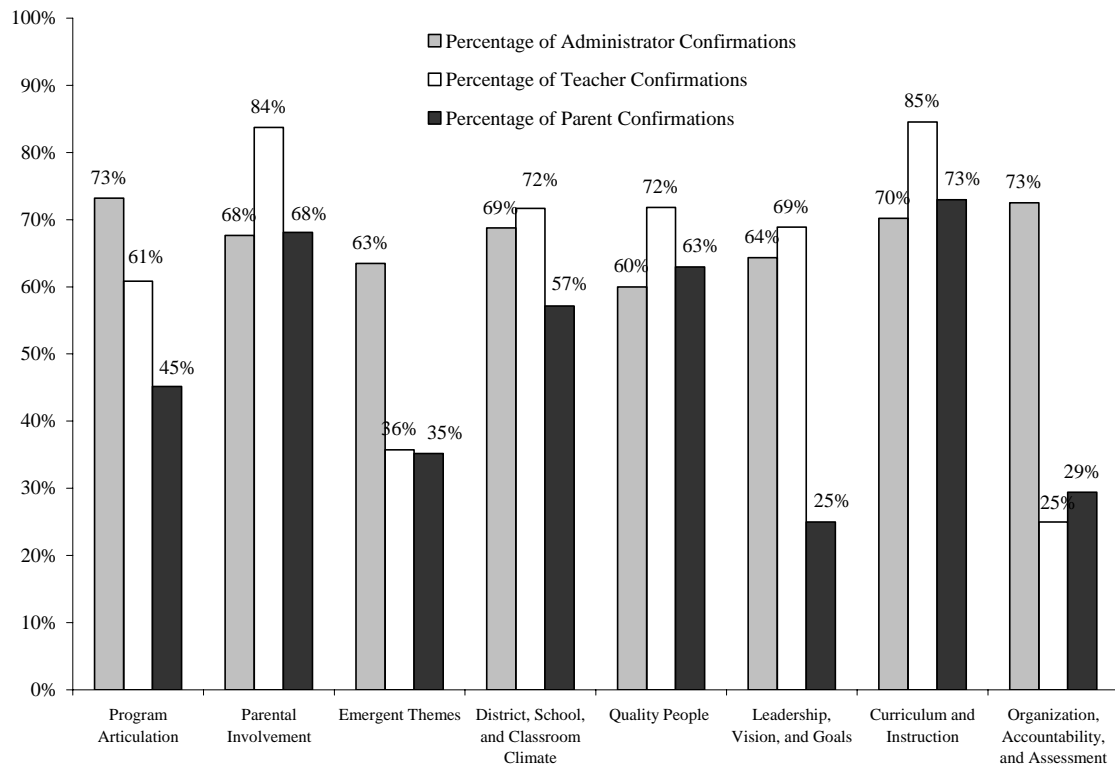
**Figure 57. Distribution of coded confirmations regarding the perceived attributes and emergent themes by participant group.**

*Similarities and Differences in the Perceptions of Program Articulation*

Program articulation, along with parental and community involvement, was perceived as the most prevalent attribute of an effective elementary bilingual education by all of the participants. This attribute was comprised of six components that were identified from previous research on effective elementary bilingual education programs. The components of the program articulation attribute included:

a) the development and maintenance of clearly articulated roles and responsibilities;
b) dynamic two-way communication;
c) focused and sustained supports between central office and school-level staff;
d) strong leadership, credibility, and respect;
e) a common program of instruction that is properly scoped, sequenced, and articulated across grade levels; and
f) a program of instruction that has been aligned with developmentally appropriate practices and student language proficiency levels in English and the students' first language.

When the administrator, teacher, and parent perceptions of program articulation were combined, the most prevalently perceived (41%) component was that an effective program of instruction for English Language Learners must be aligned with developmentally appropriate practices and student language proficiency levels in English and the students' first language. The participants perceived that dynamic two-way communication was the second most prevalent (18%) component. A common program of instruction that was properly scoped, sequenced, and articulated across grade levels was perceived as the third most prevalent (14%) component of program articulation. The participants perceived focused and sustained supports between central office and school-level staff (13%) and strong leadership, credibility, and respect for the program (13%) as the second least prevalent components. The development and maintenance of clearly

articulated roles and responsibilities was perceived as the least prevalent (1%) component of program articulation when the responses of the administrators, teachers, and parents were combined. Figure 58 graphically presents the distribution of coded responses to the components of the program articulation attribute for all participants.



n=335
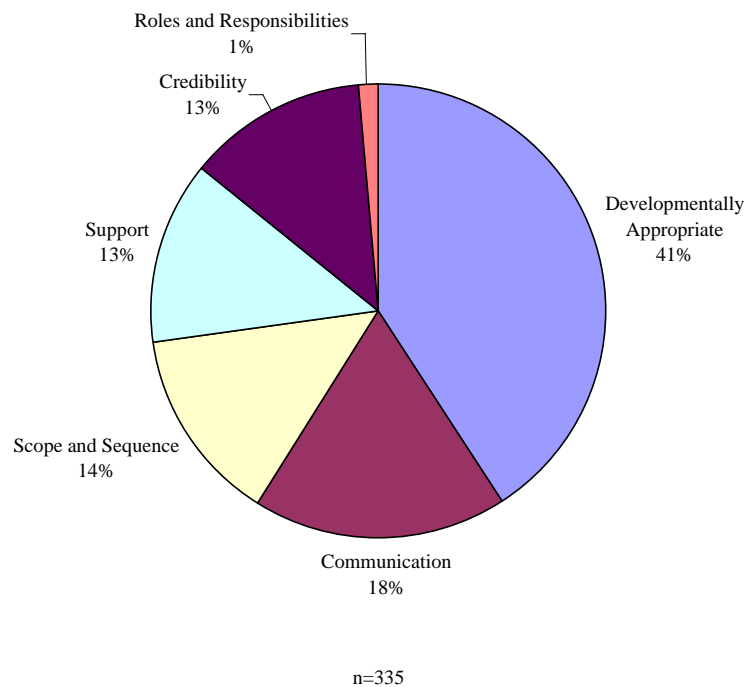
**Figure 58. Distribution of coded responses to the components of the program articulation attribute for all participants.**

The perceptions of the administrators, teachers, and parents were different in that dynamic two-way communication was perceived as the second most prevalent component by parents while teachers perceived the communication component as the least prevalent component. The perceptions were also different in that parents perceived focused and sustained supports between central office and school-level staff as the least prevalent component while the support component was perceived as the third most

prevalent component by administrators and teachers. Another difference in the perceptions was that strong leadership, credibility, and respect for the program was perceived as the second most prevalent component by administrators while the credibility component was perceived as the second least prevalent component by teachers and parents.

The perceptions of the administrators, teachers, and parents were similar in that the need for an effective program of instruction for English Language Learners to be aligned with developmentally appropriate practices and student language proficiency levels in English and the students' first language was perceived as the most prevalent component. The perceptions were also similar in that teachers and parents did not perceive the development and maintenance of clearly articulated roles and responsibilities at all and the roles and responsibilities component was perceived as the least prevalent component by administrators. Figure 59 graphically presents the distribution of coded responses to the components of the program articulation attribute by participant group.
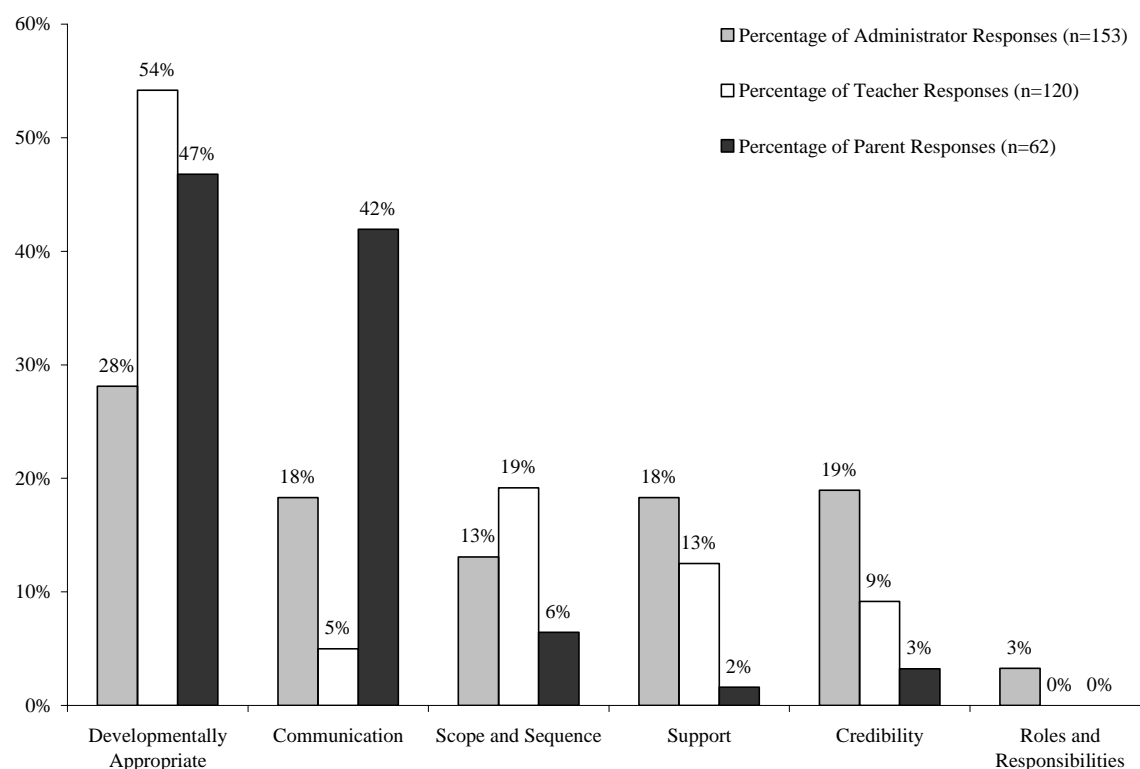
**Figure 59. Distribution of coded responses to the components of the program articulation attribute by participant group.**

The perceptions of the administrators, teachers, and parents were different in that the alignment of the program with developmentally appropriate practices and student language proficiency levels in English and the students' first language was perceived as mostly confirming by administrators and teachers while parents perceived the developmentally appropriate component as mostly concerning. An administrator confirmation included, "We know through research that students become stronger learners when they learn their concepts in their native language."

A teacher confirmation included:

> It is equally great for students to be taught in their first language and building their foundation of their first language and thus making it easier for them to transition into their second language. Thus the students learn to easily translate from one language to the other and become truly bilingual.

On the other hand, a parent concern included:

> For me, my son has been here five years, since kindergarten and now he hardly ever speaks any Spanish. In fact, he cannot read in Spanish. So, after first, I think he lost his Spanish and my father, his grandfather, tells me everyday that he needs to know Spanish. So, I teach him Spanish at home some. Because his little brother, my younger son, that is all that he speaks, Spanish. So, I do not really think he is in a bilingual program. So, if he is in a bilingual program, then he should be learning bilingual, right?

The perceptions of the administrators, teachers, and parents were also different in that the scope and sequence, credibility, and support components were perceived as mostly confirming by administrators and teachers while parents perceived them as mostly concerning.

The perceptions of the administrators, teachers, and parents were similar in that communication was the only component to be perceived as mostly confirming by all three groups of participants. Figure 60 graphically presents the distribution of coded confirmations regarding the components of the program articulation attribute by participant group.
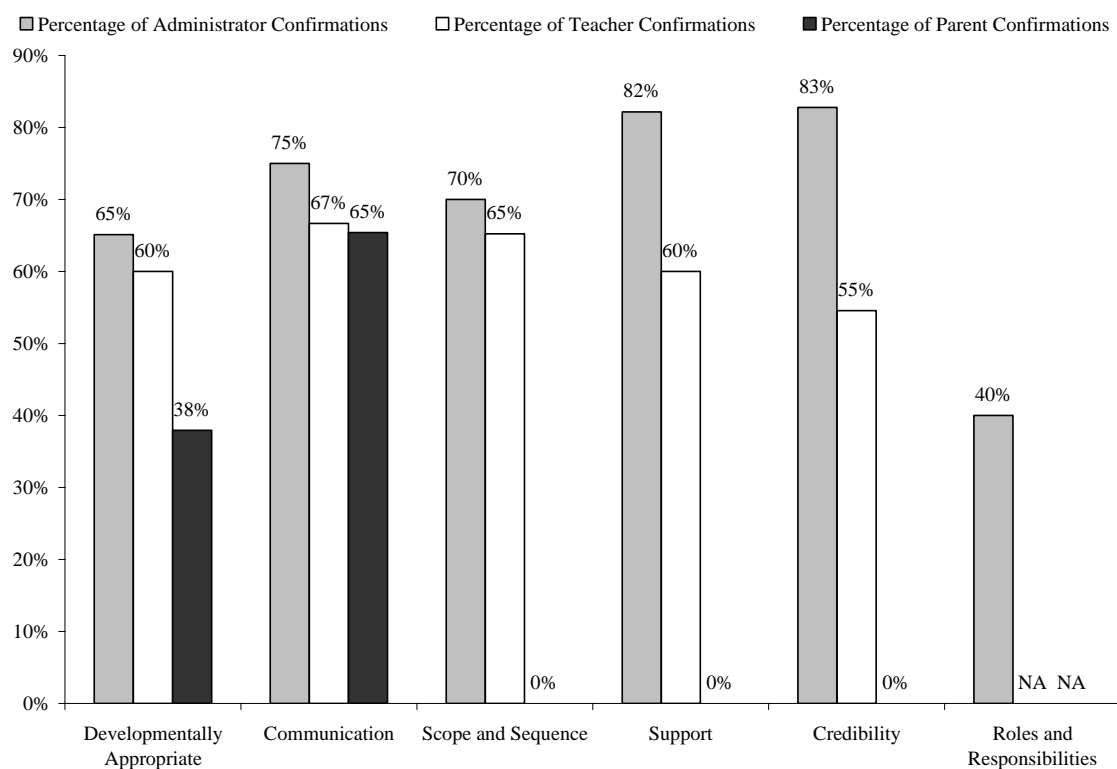
*Note*. NA indicates that there were no responses to the component. 0% indicates that all of the responses to the component were coded as concerns.

**Figure 60. Distribution of coded confirmations regarding the components of the program articulation attribute by participant group.**

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*Similarities and Differences in the Perceptions of Parental and Community Involvement*

Parental and community involvement, along with program articulation, was perceived as the most prevalent attribute of an effective elementary bilingual education program. This attribute was comprised of six components that were identified from previous research on effective elementary bilingual education programs. These components included:

a) all parents know the rationale and the critical components of the program;
b) parents and community establish partnerships with schools, extend learning into the home, and reinforce academic values outside school;
c) all parents are strong advocates of the program;
d) stakeholders implement effective strategies for overcoming common obstacles to involving parents and community members in the education of English Language Learners;
e) educators carefully examine what is actually known about culturally different families, their attitudes regarding education, and how they support their children's education through the family and their informal social networks; and
f) community family centers provide parental information, social service referrals, lending libraries, meeting places, and translation services.

When the administrator, teacher, and parent perceptions of parental and community involvement were combined, the most prevalently perceived (30%) component was for educators to carefully examine what is actually known about culturally different families, their attitudes regarding education, and how they support their children's education through the family and their informal social networks. The participants perceived that parents and community members establishing partnerships with schools, extending learning into the home, and reinforcing academic values outside school was the second most prevalent (19%) component. Effective strategies for overcoming common obstacles to involving parents and community members in the education of English Language Learners Involvement strategies was perceived as the

third most prevalent (17%) component while community family centers that provide

parental information, social service referrals, lending libraries, meeting places, and

translation services was perceived as the third least prevalent (16%) component. The

participants perceived that all parents knowing the rationale and the critical parts of the

bilingual program was the second least prevalent (10%) component. Parents who were

strong advocates of the program was perceived as the least prevalent (9%) component of

the parental and community involvement attribute when the responses of the

administrators, teachers, and parents were combined. Figure 61 graphically presents the

overall distribution of coded responses to the components of the parental and community

involvement attribute.



n=329
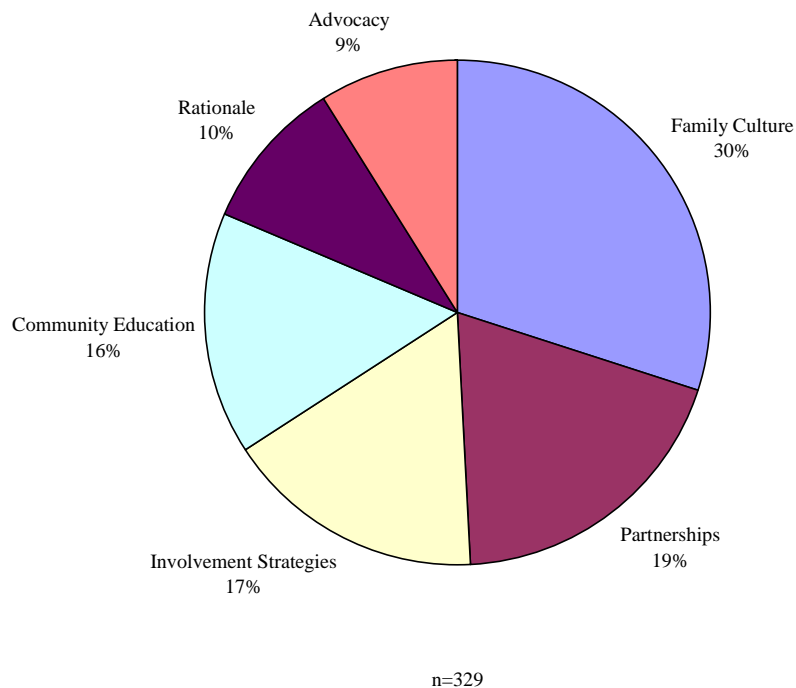
**Figure 61. Distribution of coded responses to the components of the parental and community involvement attribute for all participants.**

The perceptions of the administrators, teachers, and parents were different in that parents and community members establishing partnerships with schools, extending learning into the home, and reinforcing academic values outside school was perceived as the most prevalent component by parents and the second most prevalent component by teachers, whereas the partnerships component was perceived as the second least prevalent component by administrators. The perceptions were also different in that effective strategies for overcoming common obstacles to involving parents and community members in the education of English Language Learners was perceived as the second most prevalent component by administrators, whereas the involvement strategies component was perceived as the second least prevalent component by teachers and parents. Yet another difference was that all parents knowing the rationale and the critical components of the bilingual program was perceived as the second most prevalent component by parents while the rationale component was perceived as the least prevalent component by administrators and teachers.

The perceptions of the administrators, teachers, and parents were similar in that the careful examination of what is actually known about culturally different families, their attitudes regarding education, and how they support their children's education through the family and their informal social networks was perceived as the most prevalent component by all three groups. The perceptions were also similar in that parents who were strong advocates of the program and community family centers that provide parental information, social service referrals, lending libraries, meeting places, and translation services and advocacy were perceived as the third most prevalent

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components by all three groups. Figure 62 graphically presents the distribution of coded

responses to the components of the parental and community involvement attribute by

participant group.



**Figure 62. Distribution of coded responses to the components of the parental and community involvement attribute by participant group.**

The perceptions of the administrators, teachers, and parents were similar in that

the family culture, partnerships, and involvement strategies components were all

perceived as mostly confirming by all three groups of participants. An example of an

administrator confirmation about family culture included, "If you could define parent

involvement as a lots of volunteers and strong PTA, then we do not have it. But, if parent

involvement is about caring for their kids, then they are here."

An example of a teacher confirmation about family culture included:

> The best present the parents can give their children is to talk to them often in the language they are best in, i.e., Spanish. That is the language they know backwards and forwards, the innuendos, the inferences, the subtleties, the playing with the language.

An example of a parent confirmation about family culture included, "We also help our child with homework. We also try to notice what he is having difficulty with and we also try to have a routine at home." The perceptions of the administrators, teachers, and parents were also similar in that all of the administrator and teacher perceptions of the advocacy component were confirmations and most of the parent perceptions were confirmations. Another similarity was that all of the perceptions of the rationale component were mostly concerns by all three groups of participants.

The perceptions of the administrators, teachers, and parents were different in that most of the administrator and teacher perceptions of the community education component were confirmations while most of the parent perceptions were concerns. Figure 63 graphically presents the distribution of coded confirmations regarding the components of the parental and community involvement attribute by participant group.
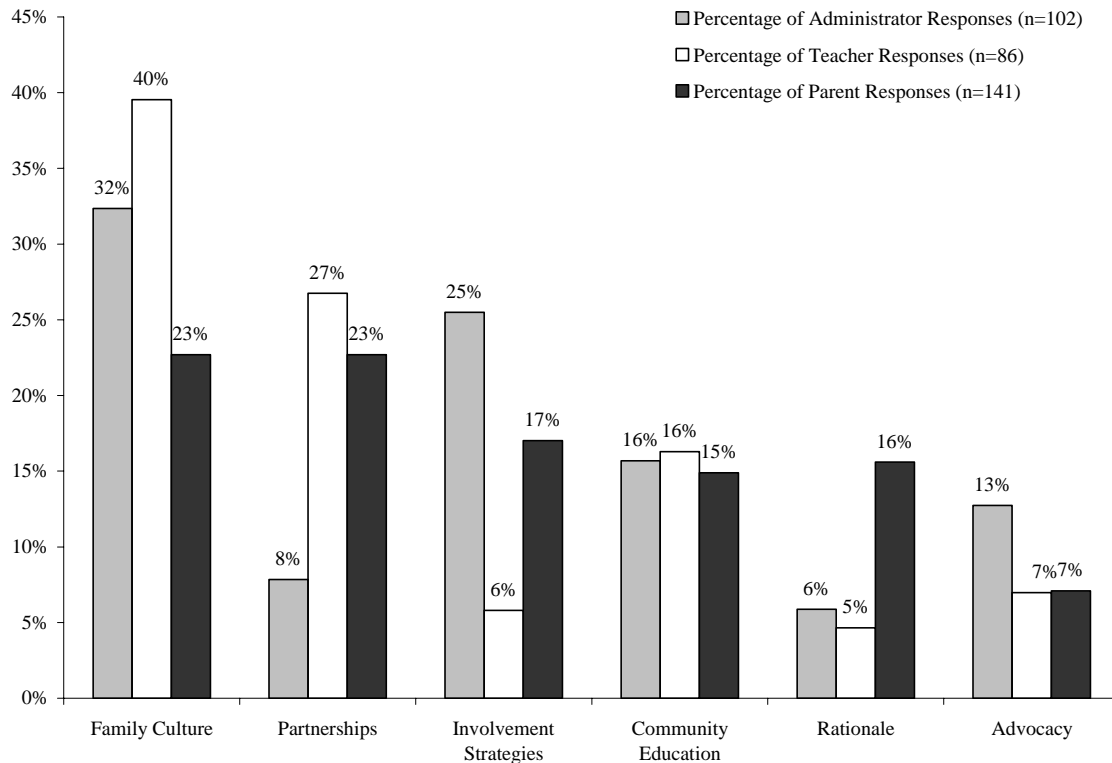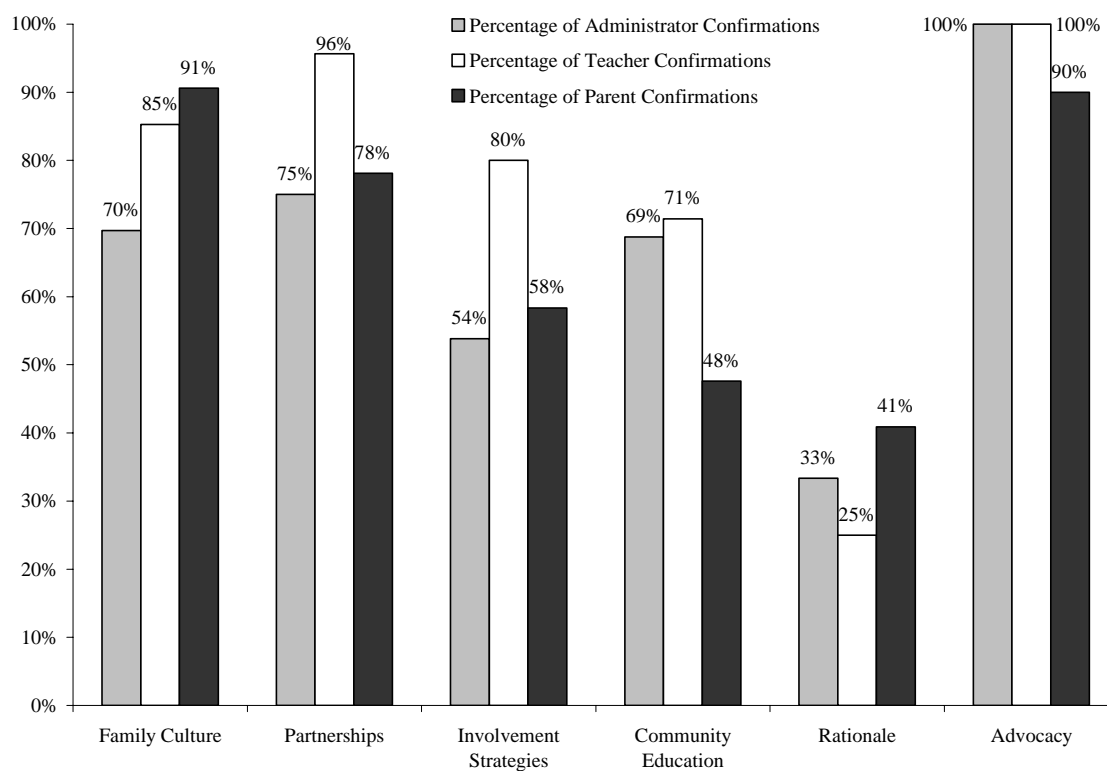
**Figure 63. Distribution of coded confirmations regarding the components of the parental and community involvement attribute by participant group.**

*Similarities and Differences in the Perceptions of Emergent Themes*

Taken as a whole, the emergent themes were perceived as the second most prevalent attribute of an effective elementary bilingual education program by all of the participants. The themes emerged from the individual administrator interviews, teacher surveys, and parent focus group interviews. The emergent themes included:

a) funding,
b) materials,
c) staffing,
d) class size,
e) translation of materials,
f) socioeconomic status,
g) educational systems, and
h) homework.

When the administrator, teacher, and parent perceptions of the emergent themes were combined, the most prevalently perceived (29%) theme was materials. Staffing (16%) was perceived as the second most prevalent theme. Translation of materials (14%) and funding (14%) were perceived as the third most prevalent theme while socioeconomic status (9%) was perceived as the third least prevalent theme. Homework (7%) and class size (7%) were perceived as the second least prevalent themes. Educational systems (4%) was perceived as the least prevalent emergent theme when the responses of the administrators, teachers, and parents were combined. Figure 64 graphically presents the distribution of coded responses to emergent themes for all participants.

Educational Systems
4%

Class size
7%

Homework
7%

Socioeconomic
9%

Materials
29%

Funding
14%

Staffing
16%

Translation
14%

n=242
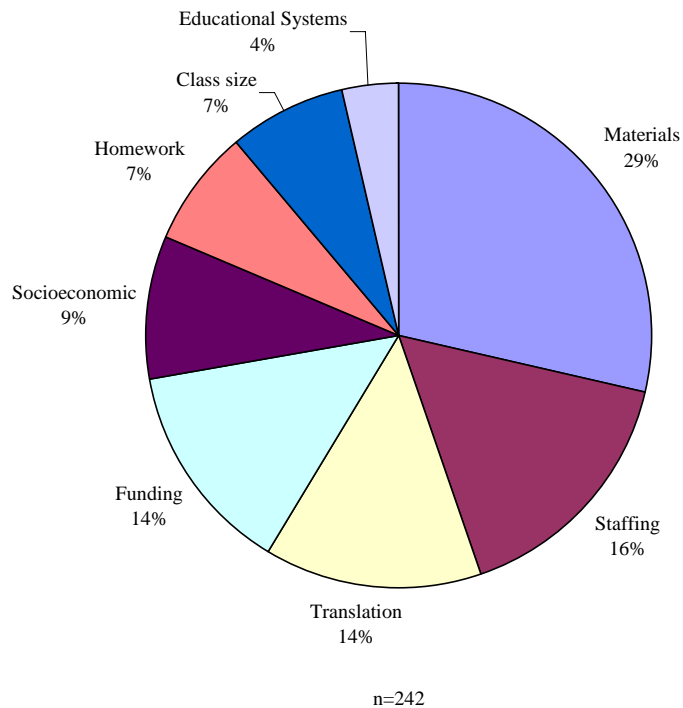
**Figure 64. Distribution of coded responses to emergent themes for all participants.**

The perceptions of the administrators, teachers, and parents were different in that funding was perceived as the most prevalent theme by administrators and third most prevalent by parents, but teachers perceived it the least prevalent. The perceptions were also different in that materials was perceived as the most prevalent theme by teachers and the second most prevalent by administrators, but parents perceived it as third least prevalent. Similarly, staffing was perceived as the most prevalent theme by administrators and second most prevalent by teachers, but it was perceived as second least prevalent by parents. The perceptions of the administrators, teachers, and parents were different in that homework and educational systems were perceived as the most and second most prevalent themes by parents, but they were not perceived at all by

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administrators and teachers. The perceptions were also different in that administrators perceived socioeconomic status as the most prevalent, while it was perceived as the least prevalent by parents and not at all by teachers.

The perceptions of the administrators, teachers, and parents were similar in that translation of materials was perceived as the third most prevalent theme by administrators and teachers and the fourth most prevalent theme by parents. The perceptions were also similar in that class size was perceived as the fourth most prevalent theme by administrators and teachers and the fifth most prevalent theme by parents. Figure 65 graphically presents the distribution of coded responses to the emergent themes by participant group.
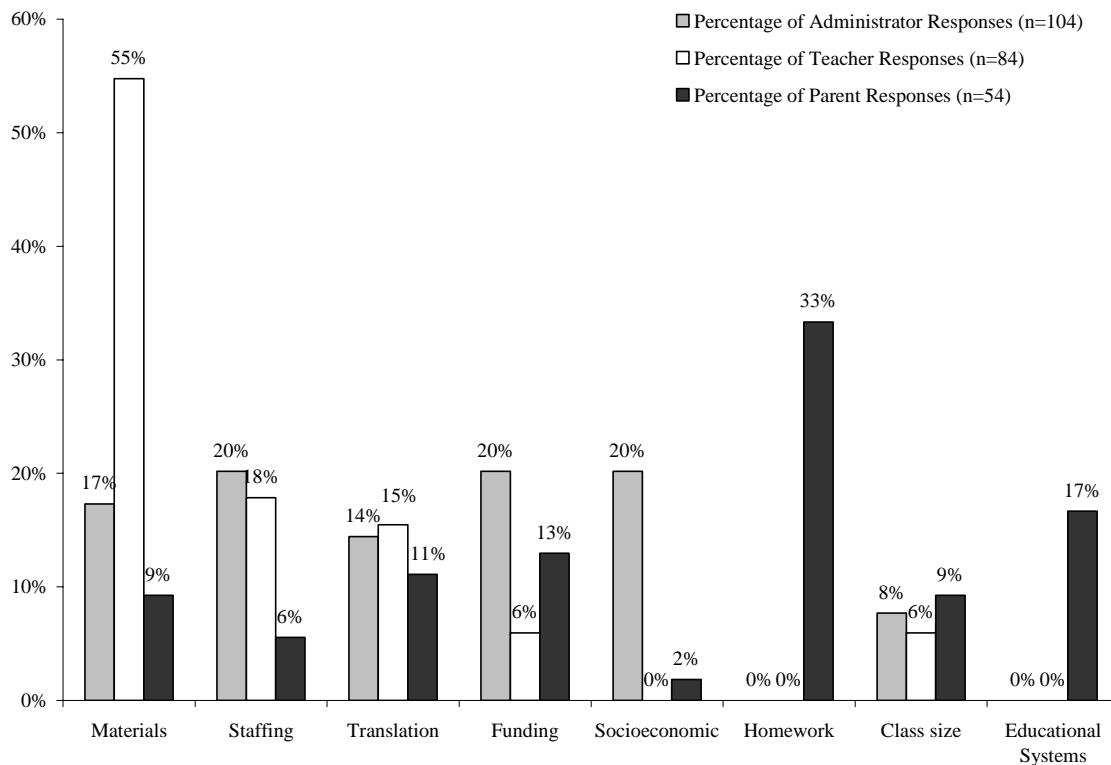


**Figure 65. Distribution of coded responses to emergent themes by participant group.**

The perceptions of the administrators, teachers, and parents were different in that the materials, staffing, funding, and class size themes received mostly confirming perceptions from administrators and parents but mostly concerning perceptions from teachers. An example of a teacher concern about materials included:

> Many of the materials provided from Central Office are direct translations of the English materials. When this happens, the level of difficulty increases for our Spanish speakers because normally translated words are not the natural words that they would hear in a natural conversation. The state does essentially the same thing. Tejas Lee materials consistently are sent riddled with errors and considerably much later than the English materials.

An example of an administrator confirmation about funding and staffing included, "Central office has realigned resources both monetarily and personnel. They have truly looked at resources." The perceptions were also different in that translation was perceived as mostly confirmations by administrators but mostly concerns by teachers and parents. One administrator confirmation included:

> The other thing that has been really powerful and has been in place for a little while is the district translator. She has been huge for our campus because one of my beliefs is that in order for parents to participate, you must make it easy for them. When we send something home in a language they don't understand, then they will not participate.

The perceptions of the administrators, teachers, and parents were similar in that all of the parent perceptions and the majority of administrator perceptions of the socioeconomic theme were confirmations. An example of an administrator confirmation included, "Low socioeconomic status parents are doing what they can. Low socioeconomic status parents are sending their kids to school. Low socioeconomic status parents help their kids as much as they can." Figure 66 graphically presents the distribution of coded confirmations regarding the emergent themes by participant group.

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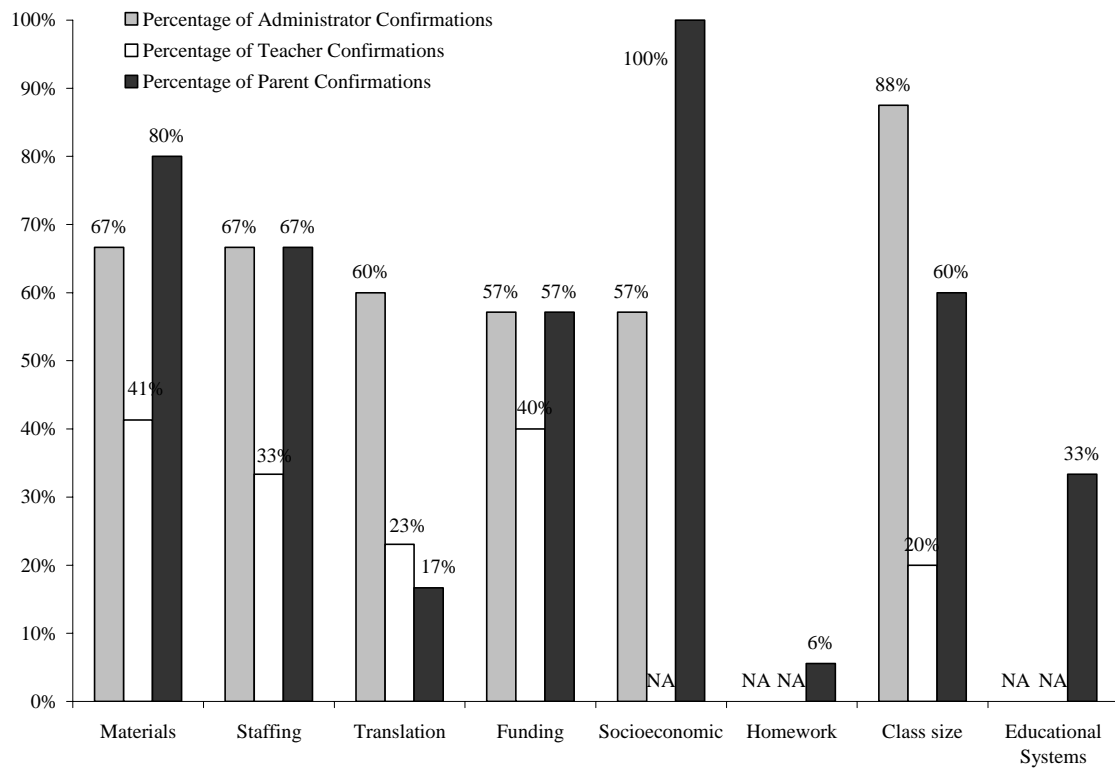
*Note*. NA indicates that there were no responses to the component.

**Figure 66. Distribution of coded confirmations regarding emergent themes by participant group.**

*Similarities and Differences in the Perceptions of District, School, and Classroom Climate*

District, school, and classroom climate was perceived as the third most prevalent

attribute of an effective elementary bilingual education program by all of the participants.

This attribute was comprised of nine components that were identified from previous

research on effective elementary bilingual education programs. These components

included:

a) creating positive, safe, and orderly district, school, and classroom environments;
b) placing value on the linguistic and cultural background of students;
c) holding high expectations for the academic achievement of English Language Learners;
d) ensuring the integral involvement of English Language Learners in the overall school operation;
e) working within a guiding framework from which English Language Learners can reflect on individual and collective actions and beliefs;
f) providing students with equal access to a rigorous curriculum, accountability to the same academic standards, the opportunity to graduate from school in equal proportions, and the chance to leave school fully prepared to lead productive, successful, and fulfilling lives;
g) empowering all stakeholders to participate in, and take responsibility from, their own learning;
h) developing positive interpersonal and pedagogical relationships and valuing caring as a cognitive commitment; and
i) focusing on those who are generally the least successful, the most marginalized, and the most disadvantaged in our education system.

When the administrator, teacher, and parent perceptions of district, school, and

classroom climate were combined, the most prevalently perceived (30%) component was

placing value on the linguistic and cultural background of students. The participants

perceived creating positive, safe, and orderly environments (20%) and providing students

with equal access to a rigorous curriculum, accountability to the same academic

standards, the opportunity to graduate from school in equal proportions, and the chance to

leave school fully prepared to lead productive, successful, and fulfilling lives (16%) as

the second and third most prevalent components. The participants perceived developing positive interpersonal and pedagogical relationships that value caring as a cognitive commitment (15%) and empowering all stakeholders to participate in, and take responsibility from, their own learning (6%) as the fourth and fifth most prevalent components.

The participants perceived ensuring the integral involvement of English Language Learners in the overall school operation (5%) and holding high expectations for the academic achievement of English Language Learners (4%) as the fourth and third least prevalent components. Focusing on those who are generally the least successful, the most marginalized, and the most disadvantaged in our education system was perceived as the second least prevalent (3%) component. Working within a guiding framework from which English Language Learners can reflect on individual and collective actions and beliefs was perceived as the least prevalent (0.4%) component of the district, school, and classroom climate attribute when the responses of the administrators, teachers, and parents were combined. Figure 67 graphically presents the distribution of coded responses to the components of the district, school, and classroom climate attribute for all participants.

Guiding Framework 0.4%

Optimistic 3%

High Expectations 4%

Integral Involvement 5%

Empowering 6%

Caring 15%

Equality 16%

Environment 20%

Culture and Language 30%

n=224
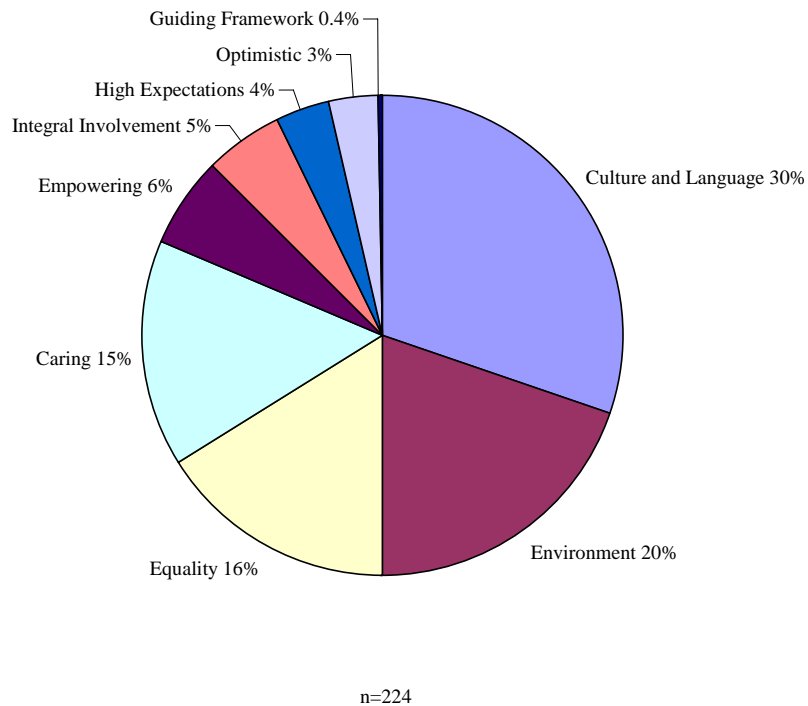
**Figure 67. Distribution of coded responses to the components of the district, school, and classroom climate attribute for all participants.**

The perceptions of the administrators, teachers, and parents were similar in that administrators and teachers perceived placing value on the linguistic and cultural background of students as the most prevalent component and parents perceived the culture and language component as the second most prevalent component. The perceptions were also similar in that developing positive interpersonal and pedagogical relationships that value caring as a cognitive commitment was perceived as the third most prevalent component by each of the three groups. Another similarity was that all three groups perceived focusing on those who are generally the least successful, the most marginalized, and the most disadvantaged in our education system as the least prevalent component.

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The perceptions of the administrators, teachers, and parents were different in that parents perceived creating positive, safe, and orderly district, school, and classroom environments as the most prevalent component, whereas the environment component was perceived the second most by administrators and fourth most by teachers. The perceptions were also different in that teachers and parents perceived providing students with equal access to a rigorous curriculum, accountability to the same academic standards, the opportunity to graduate from school in equal proportions, and the chance to leave school fully prepared to lead productive, successful, and fulfilling lives as the second most prevalent component, whereas administrators perceived the equality component as the third least prevalent component. Other differences were that holding high expectations for the academic achievement of English Language Learners was not perceived by teachers, ensuring the integral involvement of English Language Learners in the overall school operation was not perceived by parents, and working within a guiding framework was only perceived by administrators. Figure 68 graphically presents the distribution of coded responses to the components of the district, school, and classroom climate attribute by participant group.

**Figure 68. Distribution of coded responses to the components of the district, school, and classroom climate attribute by participant group.**

The perceptions of the administrators, teachers, and parents were similar in that

the environment, equality, and caring components were perceived as mostly confirming

by all three groups. An example of a parent confirmation about the environment included:

> I like the teachers to be more firm and strict with them. I believe there needs to be
> a consequence. I would like the teachers to be firm and strict because that is why
> the kids do not behave. They just need to be a little bit afraid of the teacher. My
> second grader has a teacher who is very strict and I like that.

The perceptions were also similar in that all of the teacher perceptions and most of the

administrator and parent perceptions of the empowering component were confirmations.

The perceptions of the administrators, teachers, and parents were different in that

the culture and language component was perceived as mostly confirming by

administrators and teachers but mostly concerning by parents. An example of an administrator confirmation included, "We must all move to a great middle here where the families become at ease with understanding English as the unit of education in progress and commerce in most cases, but, also we develop a respect for Spanish." An example of a teacher confirmation included, "Tolerance and appreciation for their culture and language contribute the most to the academic success of English Language Learners." The perceptions were also different in that the optimistic component was perceived as mostly confirming by parents and teachers but mostly concerning by administrators. Figure 69 graphically presents the distribution of coded confirmations regarding the components of the district, school, and classroom climate attribute by participant group.
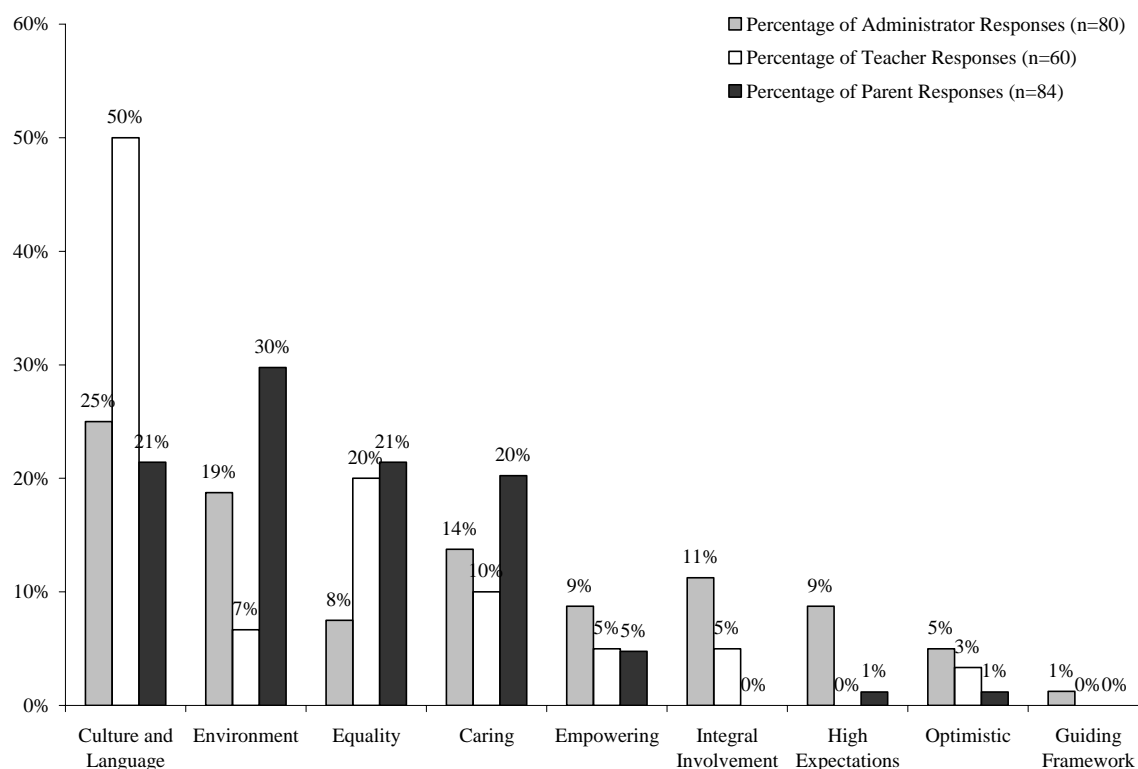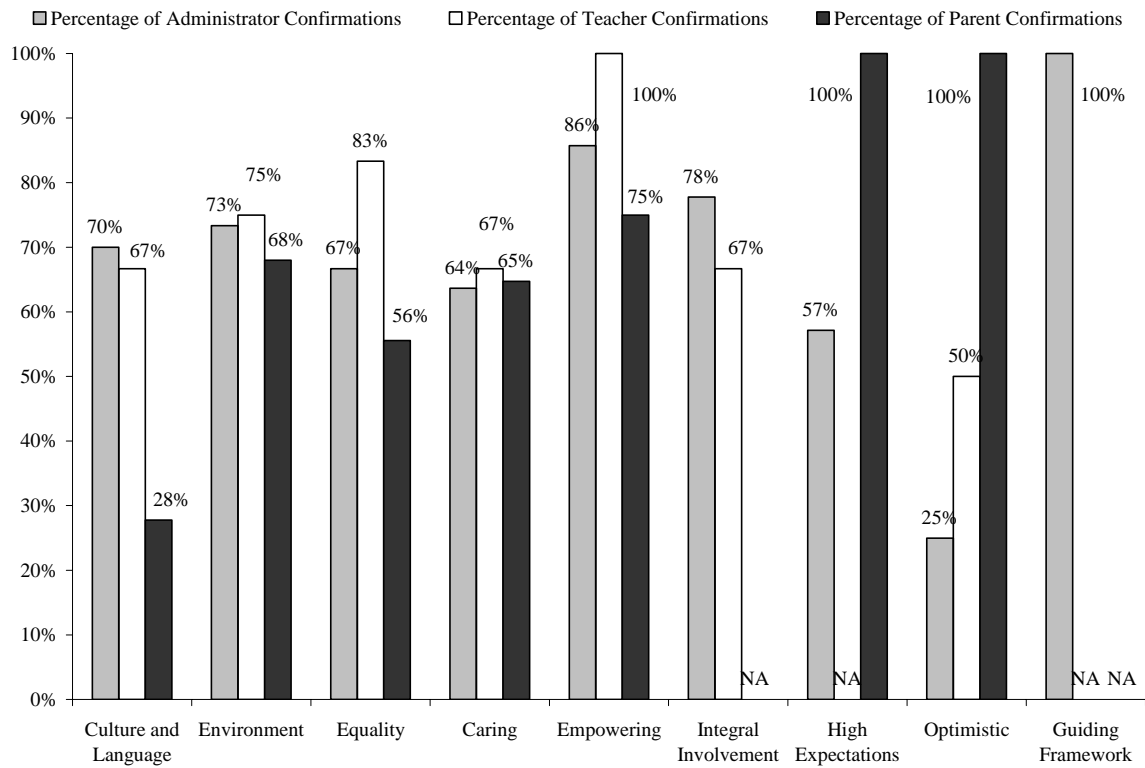
*Note.* NA indicates that there were no responses to the component.

**Figure 69. Distribution of coded confirmations regarding the components of the district, school, and classroom climate attribute by participant group.**

*Similarities and Differences in the Perceptions of Quality People*

Quality people was perceived as the third least prevalent attribute of an effective elementary bilingual education program by all of the participants. This attribute was comprised of six components that were identified from previous research on effective elementary bilingual education programs. These components included:

a) screening teacher applicants to ensure full written and oral proficiency in both languages;
b) fully credentialed bilingual and English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers continuously acquiring new knowledge regarding best practices in curriculum, instruction, and assessment;
c) all educators receiving appropriate training in the students' native language
d) all teachers in the school regularly receiving information about bilingual education, the use of data, ESL strategies, and students' cultural and linguistic characteristics that serve as assets to their academic success;
e) examining the distribution of teachers with varying levels of education, experience, and certification; and
f) improving recruitment, placement, professional development, and evaluation processes.

When the administrator, teacher, and parent perceptions of quality people were combined, the most prevalently perceived (38%) component was fully credentialed bilingual and ESL teachers continuously acquiring new knowledge regarding best practices in curriculum, instruction, and assessment. The participants perceived all educators receiving appropriate training in the students' native language as the second most prevalent (21%) component. All teachers in the school regularly receiving information about bilingual education, the use of data, ESL strategies, and students' cultural and linguistic characteristics that serve as assets to their academic success was perceived as the third most prevalent (17%) component.

Improving recruitment, placement, professional development, and evaluation processes was perceived as the third least prevalent (15%) component. The participants perceived screening teacher applicants to ensure full written and oral proficiency in both languages as the second least prevalent (7%) component. Examining the distribution of teachers with varying levels of education, experience, and certification was perceived as the least prevalent (2%) component of the quality people attribute when the responses of the administrators, teachers, and parents were combined. Figure 70 graphically presents the distribution of coded responses to the components of the quality people attribute for all participants.



Equity Audits 2%
Language Proficiency 7%
Improve Processes 15%
Bilingual Teachers 38%
Monolingual Teachers 17%
Native Language 21%

n=213
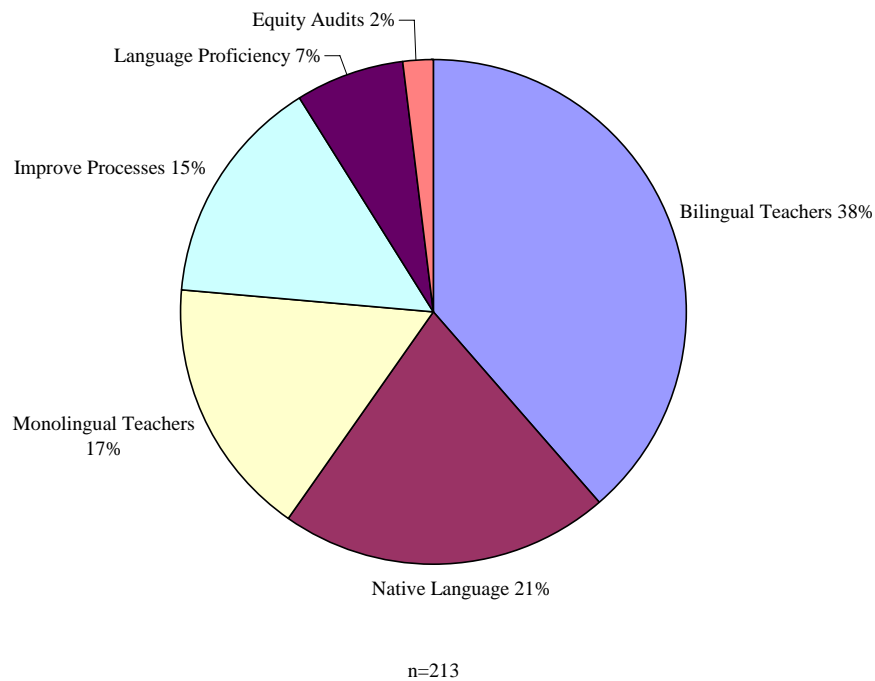
**Figure 70. Distribution of coded responses to the components of the quality people attribute for all participants.**

The perceptions of the administrators, teachers, and parents were similar in that the administrators and teachers perceived fully credentialed bilingual and ESL teachers continuously acquiring new knowledge regarding best practices in curriculum, instruction, and assessment as the most prevalent component and parents perceived the bilingual teachers component as the second most prevalent component. The perceptions were also similar in that improving recruitment, placement, professional development, and evaluation processes was perceived as the least prevalent component by administrators and parents and the second least prevalent component by teachers.

The perceptions of the administrators, teachers, and parents were different in that parents perceived screening teacher applicants to ensure full written and oral proficiency in both languages as the most prevalent component, whereas administrators and teachers perceived the language proficiency component as the least prevalent component. The perceptions were also different in that administrators and teachers perceived all educators receiving appropriate training in the students' native language as the second least prevalent component while parents perceived the native language component as the second most prevalent component.

Another difference was that all teachers in the school regularly receiving information about bilingual education, the use of data, ESL strategies, and students' cultural and linguistic characteristics that serve as assets to their academic success was perceived by administrators and teachers, whereas the monolingual teachers component was not perceived at all by parents. Yet another difference was that administrators perceived examining the distribution of teachers with varying levels of education,

experience, and certification, but neither the teachers nor the parents perceived the equity

audits component. Figure 71 graphically presents the distribution of coded responses to

the components of the quality people attribute by participant group.
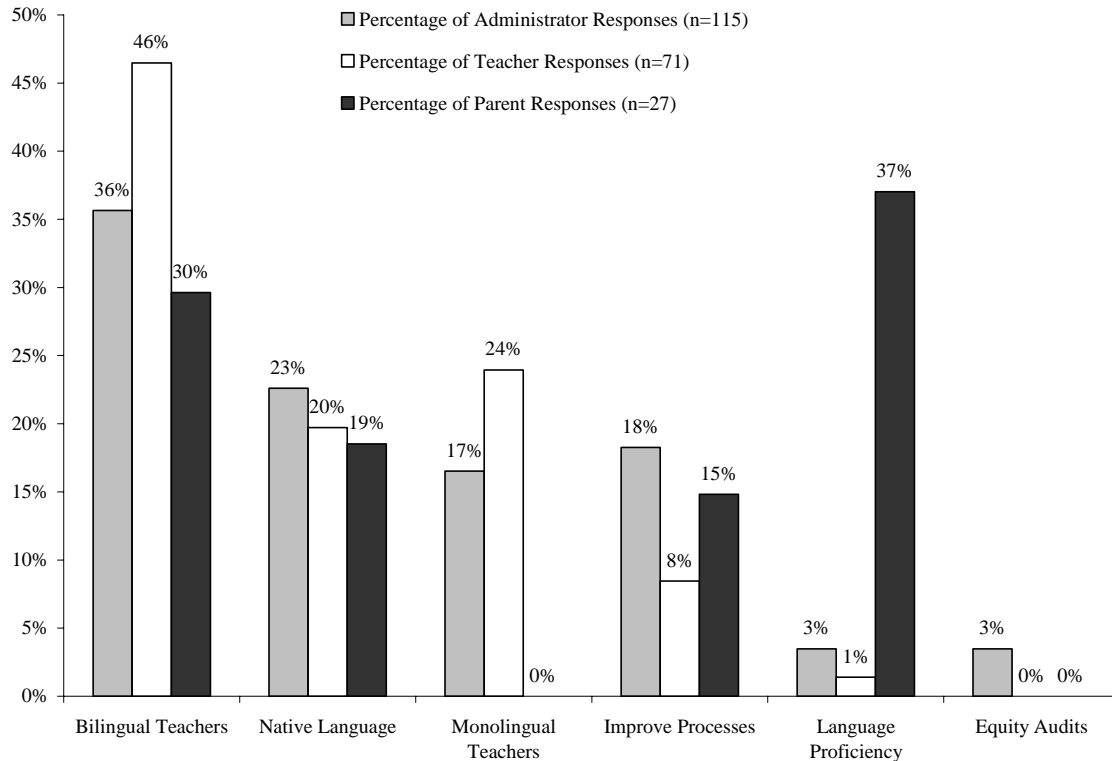


**Figure 71. Distribution of coded responses to the components of the quality people attribute by participant group.**

The perceptions of the administrators, teachers, and parents were similar in that at

least half of the perceptions regarding the bilingual teachers component were mostly

confirming. An example of an administrator confirmation included, "My bilingual

teachers are well rounded in their own education. They have a good background in

reading and mathematics. They understand how children learn. They understand how

second language learners learn." An example of a teacher confirmation included, "I think

that what I learned (especially research that has been done) about English Language

Learners in college while working on my Masters has really contributed to the academic development of the English Language Learners in my classroom."

The perceptions of the administrators, teachers, and parents were different in that the native language component was perceived as mostly confirming by the administrators and parents but mostly concerning by teachers. The perceptions were also different in that the improving processes component was perceived as mostly confirming by the teachers and parents while most administrator perceptions were concerns. Another difference was that at least half of the administrator and parent perceptions regarding language proficiency were confirmations, whereas all of the teacher perceptions were concerns. An example of a parent confirmation included, "We need more Spanish speaking teachers who know how to read and write well." Figure 72 graphically presents the distribution of coded confirmations regarding the components of the quality people attribute by participant group.
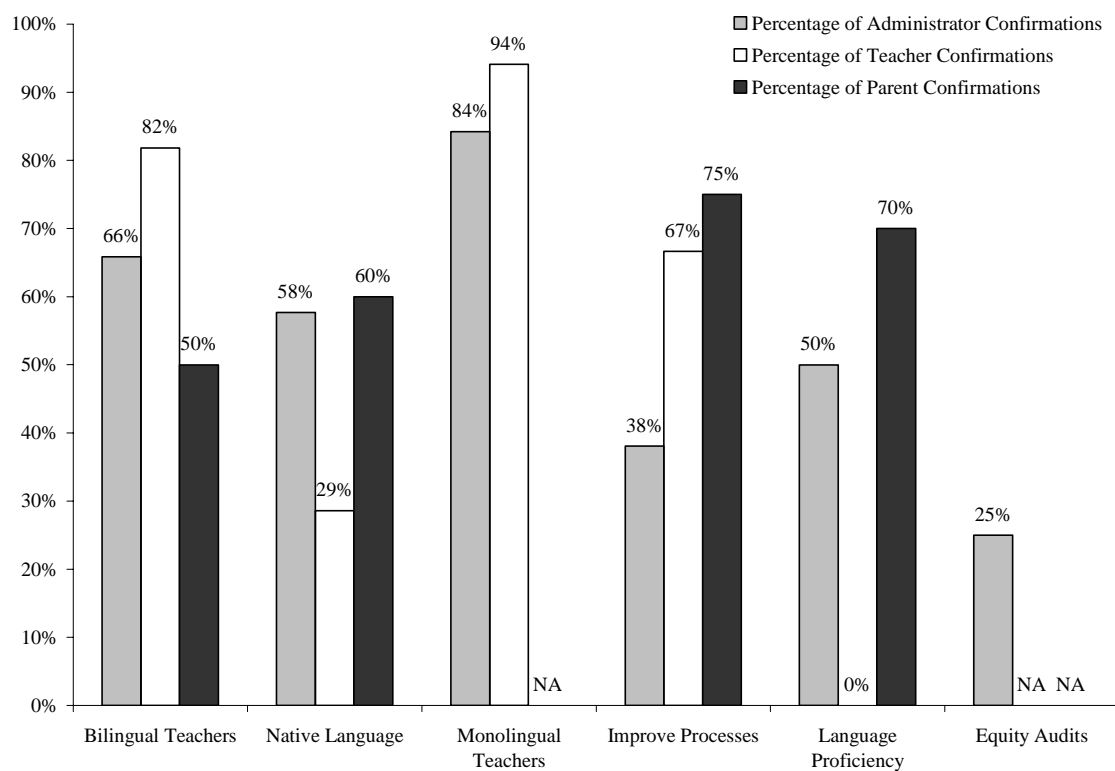
*Note*. NA indicates that there were no responses to the component. 0% indicates that all of the responses to the component were coded as concerns.

**Figure 72. Distribution of coded confirmations regarding the components of the quality people attribute by participant group.**

*Similarities and Differences in the Perceptions of Leadership, Vision, and Goals*

Leadership, vision, and goals, along with curriculum and instruction, was perceived as the second least prevalent attribute of an effective elementary bilingual education program by all of the participants. This attribute was comprised of 12 components that were identified from previous research on effective elementary bilingual education programs. These components included leaders who:

a)  are well informed of the rationale for bilingual education;
b)  share an active commitment to bilingualism;
c)  proactively involve teachers, the community, and the private sector in the design and development of the bilingual program;
d)  are open to innovation;
e)  create a vision and set of goals with the school community;
f)  define high expectations of all students;
g)  publish and disseminate high expectations so that staff, parents, and students can articulate the purpose of the school in their own words;
h)  are aware of the social, political, and economic forces that interact in the educational arena;
i)  raise questions about the systems, organizational frameworks, and leadership theories that privilege certain groups and/or perspectives over others;
j)  challenge oppression in all forms;
k)  encourage culturally and linguistically different students to find and use their individual and collective voices; and
l)  transform schools from being sorting mechanisms for the larger global market to being institutions of hope and social change.

When the administrator, teacher, and parent perceptions of leadership, vision, and goals were combined, the most prevalently perceived (37%) component was leaders who are well informed of the rationale for bilingual education. The participants perceived leaders who create a vision and set of goals with the school community (18%) and proactively involve teachers, the community, and the private sector in the design and development of the bilingual program (15%) as the second and third most prevalent components. Leaders who publish and disseminate high expectations so that staff,

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parents, and students can articulate the purpose of the school in their own words (6%), are aware of the social, political, and economic forces that interact in the educational arena (6%), and share an active commitment to bilingualism (6%) were perceived as the fourth most prevalent components.

Leaders who raise questions about the systems, organizational frameworks, and leadership theories that privilege certain groups and/or perspectives over others was perceived as the third least prevalent (4%) component. Leaders who are open to innovation (2%) and challenge oppression in all forms (2%) were perceived as the second least prevalent components. Leaders who define high expectations of all students (1%), encourage culturally and linguistically different students to find and use their individual and collective voices (1%), and transform schools from being sorting mechanisms for the larger global market to being institutions of hope and social change (1%) were perceived as the least prevalent components of the leadership, vision, and goals attribute when the responses of the administrators, teachers, and parents were combined. Figure 73 graphically presents the distribution of coded responses to the components of the leadership, vision, and goals attribute for all participants.
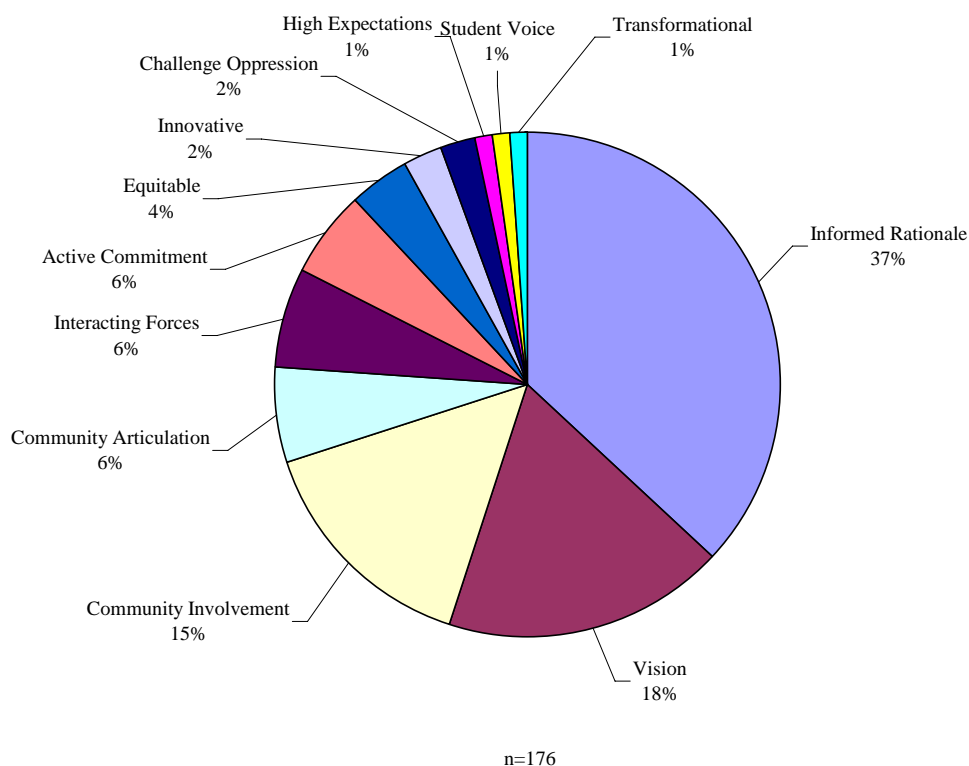
**Figure 73. Distribution of coded responses to the components of the leadership, vision, and goals attribute for all participants.**

The perceptions of the administrators, teachers, and parents were similar in that leaders who are well informed of the rationale for bilingual education was perceived as the most prevalent component by administrators and teachers and the informed rationale component was perceived third most by parents. The perceptions were also similar in that leaders who proactively involve teachers, the community, and the private sector in the design and development of the bilingual program was perceived by parents as the most prevalent component, teachers perceived the community involvement component the second most, and administrators perceived it third most. Another similarity was that leaders who create a vision and set of goals with the school community was perceived as

the third most prevalent component by teachers and parents and the vision component was perceived as the second most prevalent component by administrators.

The perceptions of the administrators, teachers, and parents were different in that teachers perceived leaders who share an active commitment to bilingualism as the second most prevalent component and parents perceived it third most, whereas administrators perceived the active commitment component as the second least prevalent component. The perceptions were also different in that leaders who are open to innovation was perceived by administrators and teachers, leaders who define high expectations of all students was perceived by teachers and parents, and leaders who publish and disseminate high expectations so that staff, parents, and students can articulate the purpose of the school in their own words was perceived by administrators and parents.

Another difference was that leaders who challenge oppression in all forms and are aware of the social, political, and economic forces that interact in the educational arena was only perceived by administrators, while leaders who encourage culturally and linguistically different students to find and use their individual and collective voices and transform schools from being sorting mechanisms for the larger global market to being institutions of hope and social change was only perceived by teachers. Figure 74 graphically presents the distribution of coded responses to the components of the leadership, vision, and goals attribute by participant group.
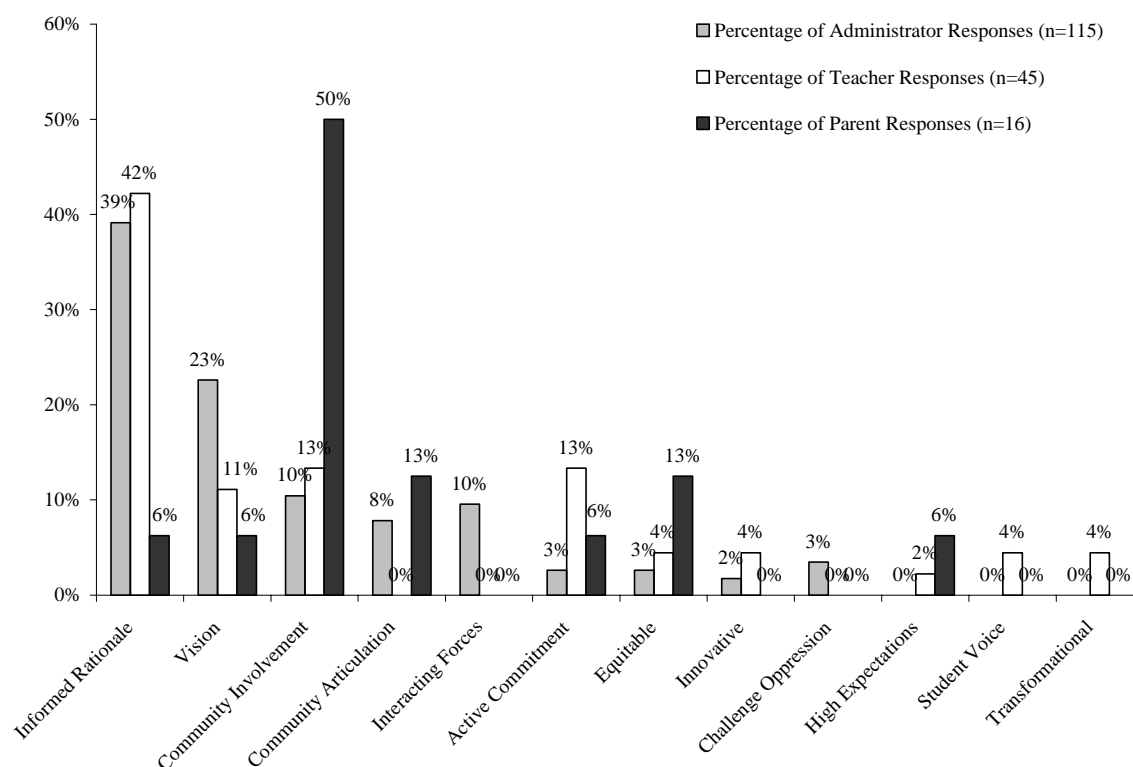
**Figure 74. Distribution of coded responses to the components of the leadership, vision, and goals attribute by participant group.**

The perceptions of the administrators, teachers, and parents were similar in that active commitment was the only component perceived as confirming by all of the participants. The perceptions were also similar in that at least half of the administrator and teacher perceptions regarding informed rationale, vision, and equity were confirming. An example of an administrator confirmation about informed rationale included, "A principal needs to have an understanding of the philosophy of the program." An example of a teacher confirmation about informed rationale included, "Our principal has a deep understanding of English Language Learners, and her decisions reflect this understanding."

The perceptions of the administrators, teachers, and parents were different in that the community involvement component was perceived as mostly confirming by administrators and teachers, whereas parents perceived it as mostly concerning. An example of a parent concern included, "I have no contact with the principal. I have not come to the meetings. I do not know her." Figure 75 graphically presents the distribution of coded confirmations regarding the components of the leadership, vision, and goals attribute by each participant group.
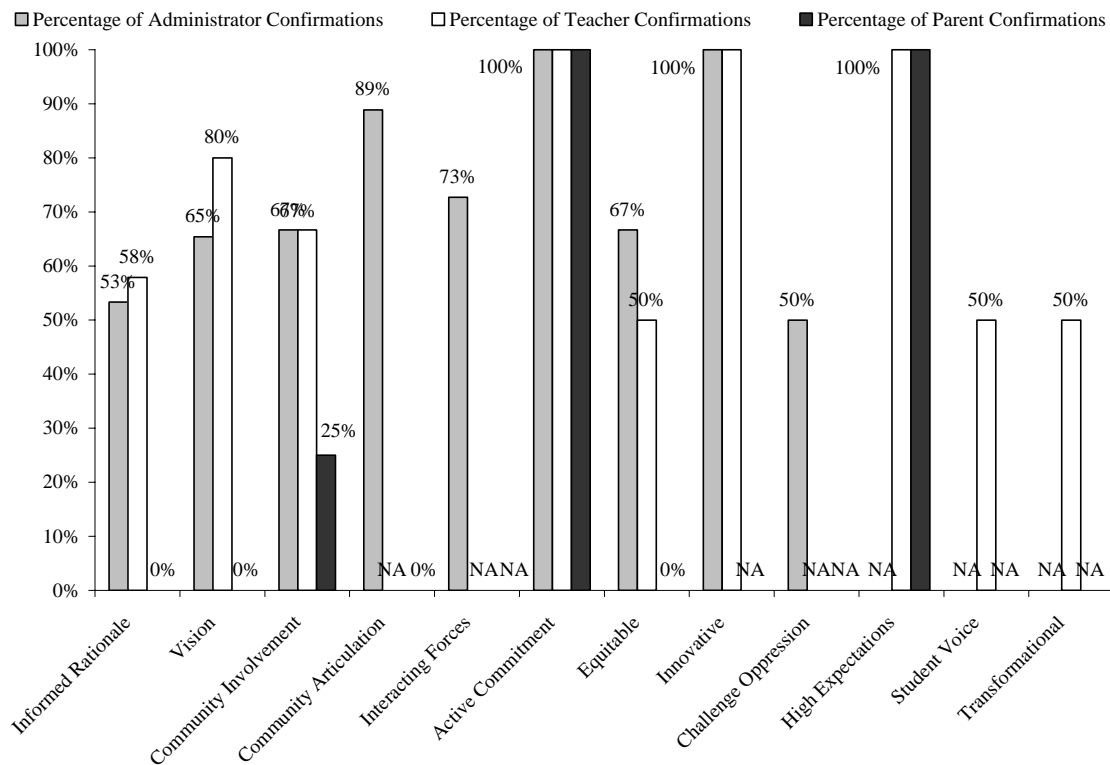


*Note*. NA indicates that there were no responses to the component. 0% indicates that all of the responses to the component were coded as concerns.

**Figure 75. Distribution of coded confirmations regarding the components of the leadership, vision, and goals attribute by participant group.**

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*Similarities and Differences in the Perceptions of Curriculum and Instruction*

Curriculum and instruction, along with leadership, vision, and goals, was

perceived as the second least prevalent attribute of an effective elementary bilingual

education program by all of the participants. This attribute was comprised of 11

components that were identified from previous research on effective elementary bilingual

education programs. These components included:

a) emphasizing functional communication between teachers and students and among fellow students;
b) organizing the instruction of skills and academic content around thematic units;
c) promoting frequent student interaction through collaborative learning techniques;
d) supplementing explicit skills instruction with student-directed activities such as cooperative learning, partner reading, and collaborative inquiry;
e) promoting high expectations for all students;
f) creating active learning environments that are meaningful, technologically appropriate, and academically challenging;
g) using a variety of innovative instructional techniques that respond to different learning styles;
h) seeking an educationally productive balance between commonality and diversity in heterogeneous schools and classrooms;
i) promoting a philosophy of curriculum and instruction that capitalizes on the strengths of each child;
j) viewing cultural ways of learning as resources rather than deficits; and
k) making change a clearly defined, focused, and manageable process.

When the administrator, teacher, and parent perceptions of curriculum and

instruction were combined, the most prevalently perceived (21%) component was using a

variety of innovative instructional techniques that respond to different learning styles.

Participants perceived creating active learning environments that are meaningful,

technologically appropriate, and academically challenging (19%) and supplementing

explicit skills instruction with student-directed activities such as cooperative learning,

partner reading, and collaborative inquiry (12%) as the second and third most prevalent

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components. Promoting a philosophy of curriculum and instruction that capitalizes on the strengths of each child was perceived as the fourth most prevalent (11%) component. Participants perceived promoting high expectations for all students and emphasizing functional communication between teachers and students and among fellow students as the fifth most prevalent (10%) components.

Participants perceived viewing cultural ways of learning as resources rather than deficits (6%) and organizing the instruction of skills and academic content around thematic units (5%) as the fifth and fourth least prevalent components. Promoting frequent student interaction through collaborative learning techniques (4%) and seeking an educationally productive balance between commonality and diversity in heterogeneous schools and classrooms (2%) were perceived as the third and second least prevalent components. Making change a clearly defined, focused, and manageable process was perceived as the least prevalent (1%) component of the curriculum and instruction attribute when the responses of the administrators, teachers, and parents were combined. Figure 76 graphically presents the distribution of coded responses to the components of the curriculum and instruction attribute for all participants.
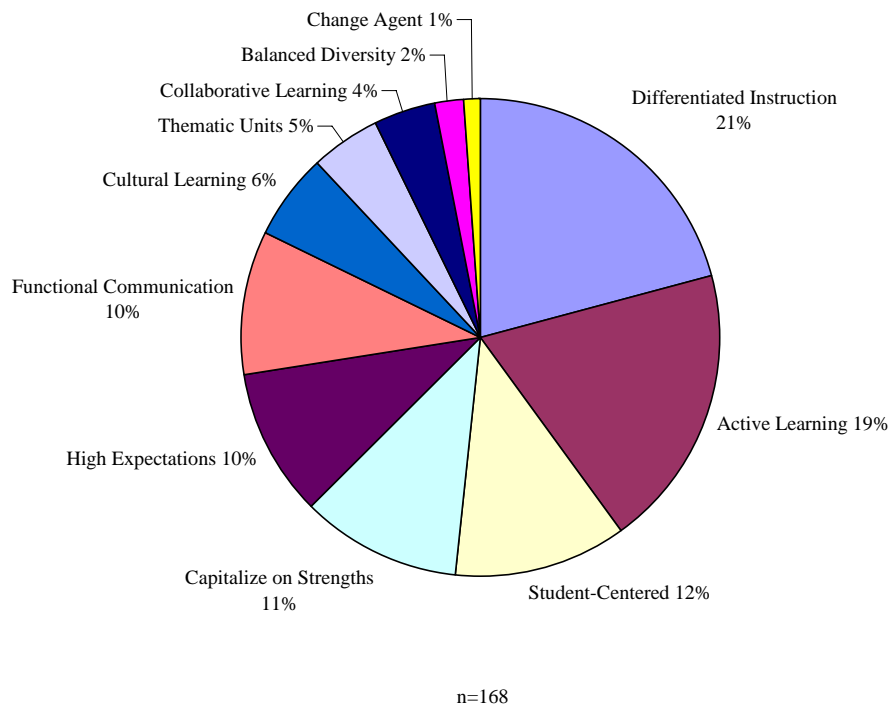
**Figure 76. Distribution of coded responses to the components of the curriculum and instruction attribute for all participants.**

The perceptions of the administrators, teachers, and parents were similar in that using a variety of innovative instructional techniques that respond to different learning styles was perceived as the most prevalent component by teachers, second most by parents, and third most by administrators. The perceptions were also similar in that creating active learning environments that are meaningful, technologically appropriate, and academically challenging was perceived as the most prevalent component by parents and third most by administrators and teachers.

The perceptions of the administrators, teachers, and parents were different in that promoting high expectations for all students was perceived as the most prevalent component by administrators and third most by parents, whereas teachers perceived the

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high expectations component as the least prevalent component. The perceptions were also different in that promoting a philosophy of curriculum and instruction that capitalizes on the strengths of each child was perceived as the second most prevalent component by administrators, whereas the capitalize on strengths component was perceived as the third least prevalent component by parents and teachers. Another difference was that teachers and parents perceived emphasizing functional communication between teachers and students and among fellow students as the fourth most prevalent component while administrators perceived the functional communication component as the second least prevalent component.

The perceptions of the administrators, teachers, and parents were different in that supplementing explicit skills instruction with student-directed activities such as cooperative learning, partner reading, and collaborative inquiry was perceived as the second most prevalent component by teachers and the fourth most prevalent by the administrators, whereas the student-centered component was not perceived by the parents. The perceptions were also different in that the administrators and the teachers perceived viewing cultural ways of learning as resources rather than deficits and organizing the instruction of skills and academic content around thematic units, whereas the parents did not perceive the cultural learning or thematic units components. Another difference was that the teachers and parents perceived promoting frequent student interaction through collaborative learning techniques and seeking an educationally productive balance between commonality and diversity in heterogeneous schools and classrooms, whereas the administrators did not perceive the collaborative learning or

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balanced diversity components. Figure 77 graphically presents the distribution of coded responses to the components of the curriculum and instruction attribute by participant group.
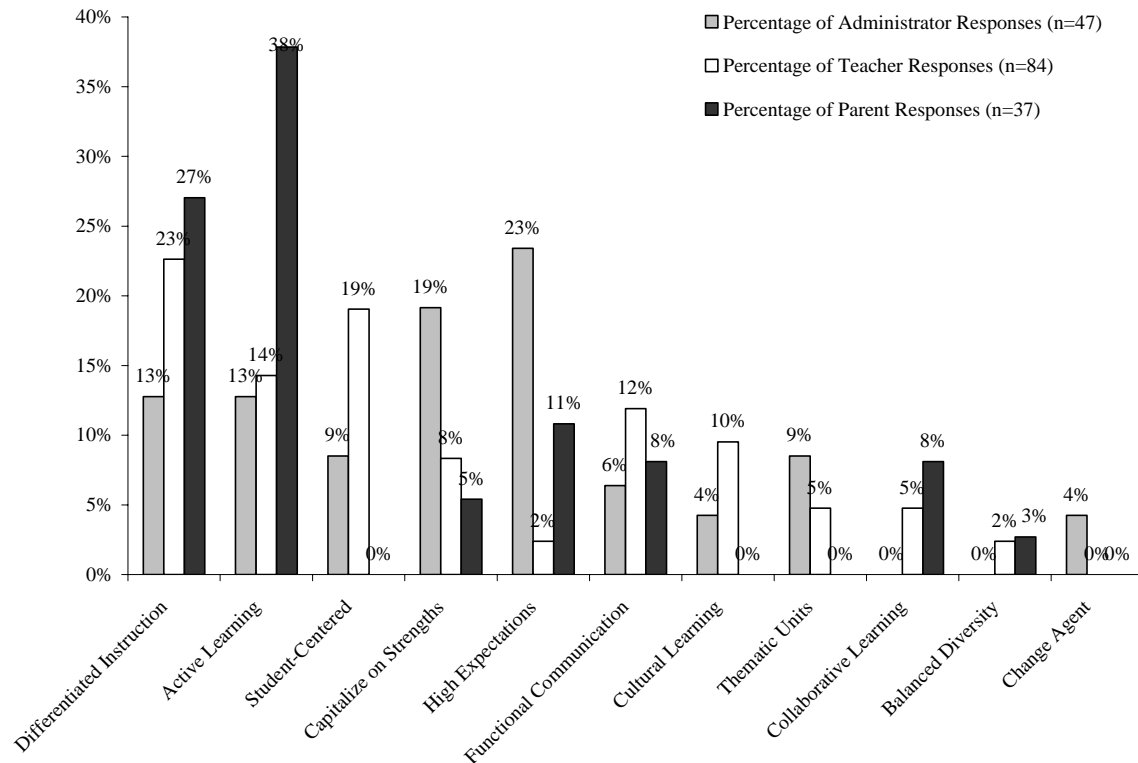


**Figure 77. Distribution of coded responses to the components of the curriculum and instruction attribute by participant group.**

The perceptions of the administrators, teachers, and parents were similar in that each participant group perceived the active learning component as mostly confirming. An example of a parent confirmation included, "My son was really hyper and into everything. Keeping him involved and helping other kids was a good way to keep him involved and to help him be quiet." The perceptions were also similar in that all of the teacher and parent perceptions regarding high expectations were confirming along with the majority of the administrator perceptions.

An example of an administrator confirmation included:

> The successful teachers have high expectations for the kids. That don't let up and they don't give up. They don't love them stupid. Just because you don't speak English does not make you less intelligent or less able. In fact, it makes you more intelligent and more able, in many cases. They push and they don't give up.

Another similarity was that all of the teacher perceptions regarding differentiated instruction were confirming along with the majority of the administrator and parent perceptions. An example of a teacher confirmation included, "Using graphic organizers to develop vocabulary and displaying vocabulary in both languages. Using a differentiated teaching approach. Using lots of visuals and manipulatives."

The perceptions of the administrators, teachers, and parents were similar in that all of the administrator perceptions regarding functional communication were confirming along with the majority of the teacher and parent perceptions. The perceptions were also similar in that all of the teacher and parent perceptions regarding collaborative learning and balanced diversity were confirming. Another similarity was that all of the parent perceptions and half of the teacher perceptions regarding the student-centered component were confirming. Yet another similarity was that all of the administrator perceptions regarding cultural learning were concerning while the majority of the teacher perceptions were concerning.

The perceptions of the administrators, teachers, and parents were different in that the majority of the administrator perceptions and half of the parent perceptions regarding the capitalize on strengths component were confirming while the majority of the teacher perceptions were concerning. The majority of the parent perceptions regarding thematic units were confirming while the majority of the teacher perceptions were concerning.

Figure 78 graphically presents the distribution of coded confirmations regarding the

components of the curriculum and instruction attribute by participant group.
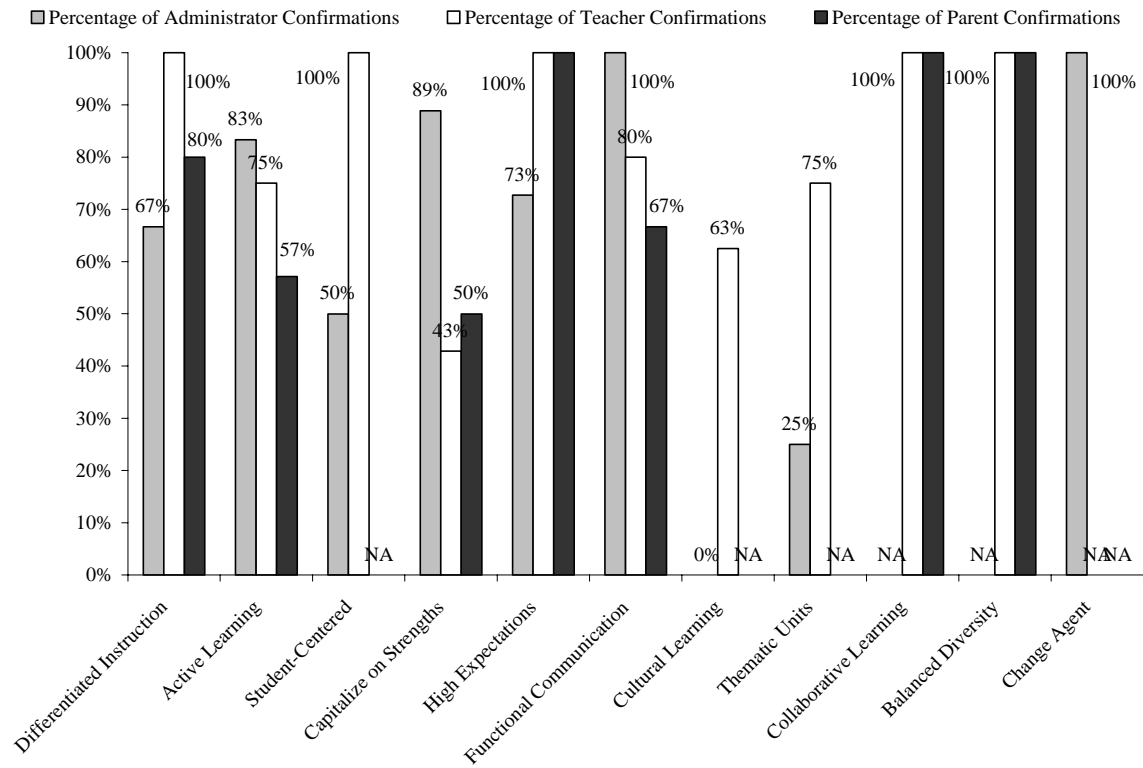


*Note.* NA indicates that there were no responses to the component. 0% indicates that all of the responses to the component were coded as concerns.

**Figure 78. Distribution of coded confirmations regarding the components of the curriculum and instruction attribute by participant group.**

*Similarities and Differences in the Perceptions of Organization, Accountability, and Assessment*

Organization, accountability, and assessment was perceived as the least prevalent

attribute of an effective elementary bilingual education program by all participants. This

attribute was comprised of four components that were identified from previous research

on effective elementary bilingual education programs. These components included:

a) systematic assessment of student achievement informs ongoing efforts to improve academic success,
b) the elementary bilingual education program is an integral part of the district and campus academic plan and is widely respected by the administration,
c) there is strong accountability for the success of all students, and
d) data is used appropriately.

When the administrator, teacher, and parent perceptions of organization,

accountability, and assessment were combined, the most prevalently perceived (41%)

component was strong accountability for the success of all students. Systematic

assessment of student achievement that informs ongoing efforts to improve academic

success was perceived as the second most prevalent (36%) component. Participants

perceived elementary bilingual education programs that are an integral part of the district

and campus academic plan and are widely respected by the administration as the second

least prevalent (12%) component. The appropriate use of data was perceived as the least

prevalent (11%) component of the organization, accountability, and assessment attribute

when the responses of the administrators, teachers, and parents were combined. Figure 79

graphically presents the distribution of coded responses to the components of the

organization, accountability, and assessment attribute for all participants.

Appropriate Use 11%

Integrity 12%

Strong Accountability 41%

Systematic Assessment
36%

n=73
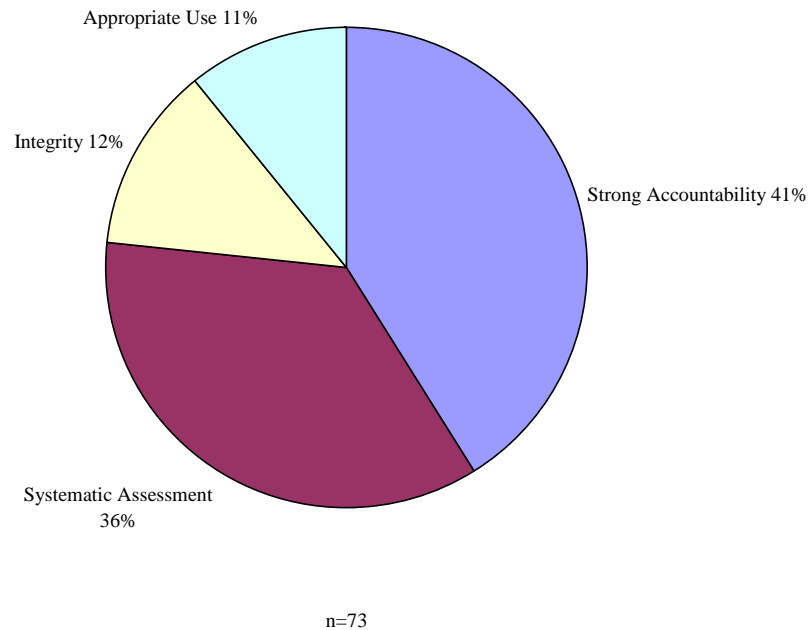
**Figure 79. Distribution of coded responses to the components of the organization, accountability, and assessment attribute for all participants.**

The perceptions of the administrators, teachers, and parents were similar in that

strong accountability for the success of all students was perceived as the most prevalent

component by administrators and parents and second most by teachers. The perceptions

were also similar in that systematic assessment of student achievement that informs

ongoing efforts to improve academic success was perceived as the most prevalent

component by teachers and second most by administrators and parents.

The perceptions of the administrators, teachers, and parents were different in that

elementary bilingual education programs that are an integral part of the district and

campus academic plan and are widely respected by the administration was perceived as

the least prevalent component by teachers, third least by administrators, but not at all by

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the parents. The perceptions were also different in that the appropriate use of data was perceived as the least prevalent component by administrators and teachers but not at all by the parents. Figure 80 graphically presents the distribution of coded responses to the components of the organization, accountability, and assessment attribute by participant group.
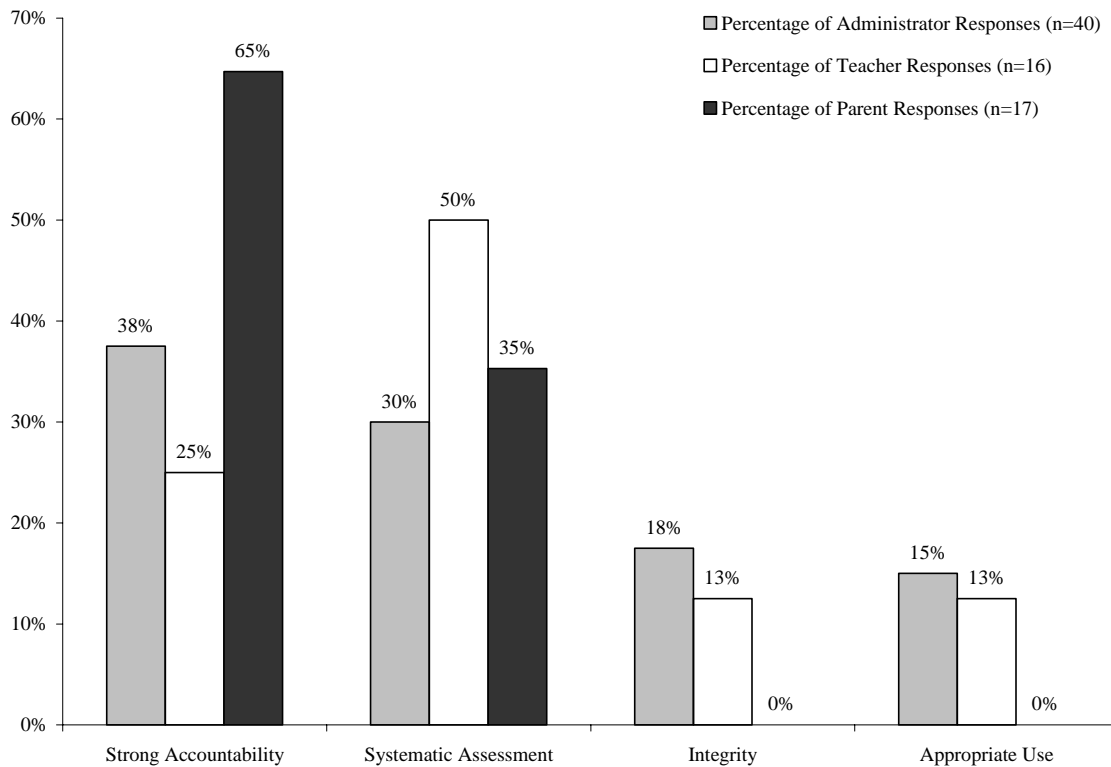


**Figure 80. Distribution of coded responses to the components of the organization, accountability, and assessment attribute by participant group.**

The perceptions of the administrators, teachers, and parents were different in that all of the teacher perceptions and the majority of the parent perceptions regarding strong accountability were concerning while the majority of the administrator perceptions were confirming. An example of a parent concern included, "My daughter is in second grade and she just found out about the tests in third grade and now she does not want to go on

into third grade. My kid is only in kindergarten and he does not want to go on ahead." An example of an administrator confirmation included, "If they don't have a sense of urgency. Oh my gosh, that frustrates me more than anything. We only have 175 days to teach our kids and there is so much to do. Get going from day one." The perceptions were also different in that the majority of the administrator perceptions and half of the parent perceptions regarding systematic assessment were confirming while the majority of the teacher perceptions were concerning. An example of a teacher concern included, "In addition, we have to deal with standardized testing which is culturally biased. Even though these tests are available in Spanish, they are not relevant to the everyday language our students are used to." Another difference was that half of the teacher perceptions regarding the integrity and respect for the program were confirming while the majority of the administrator perceptions were concerning. Yet another difference was that all of the administrator perceptions regarding the appropriate use of data were confirming while all of the teacher perceptions were concerning. Figure 81 graphically presents the distribution of coded confirmations regarding the components of the organization, accountability, and assessment attribute by participant group.
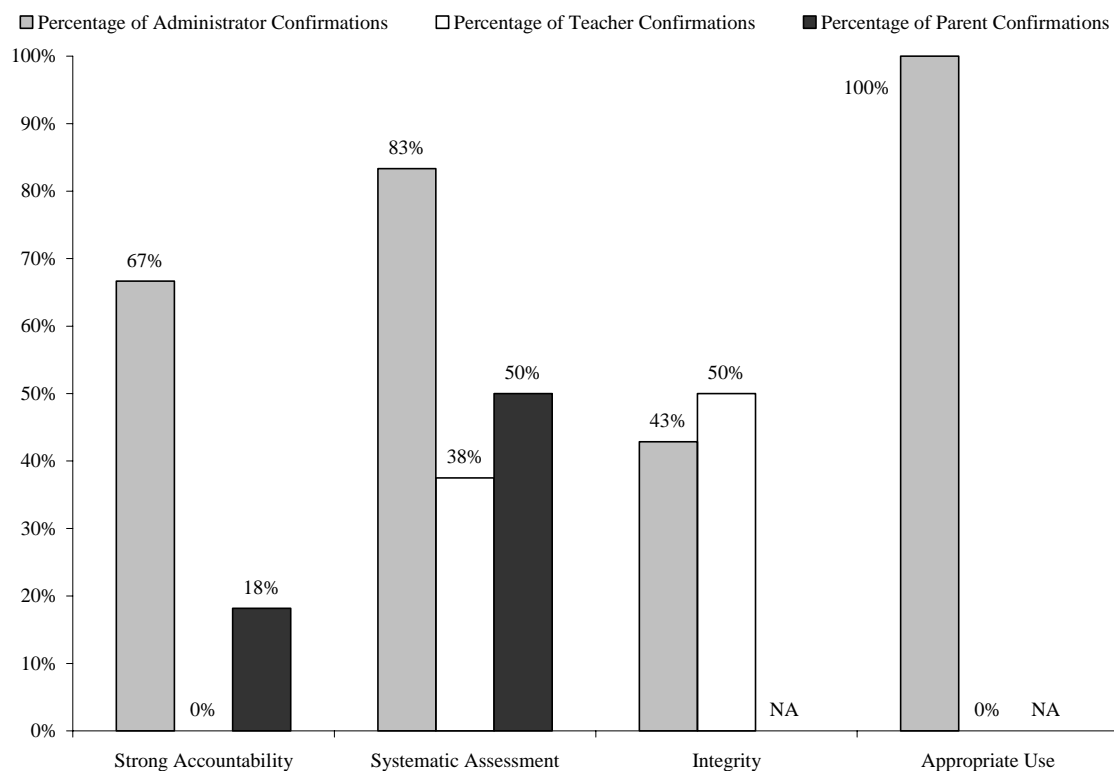
*Note*. NA indicates that there were no responses to the component. 0% indicates that all of the responses to the component were coded as concerns.

**Figure 81. Distribution of coded confirmations regarding the components of the organization, accountability, and assessment attribute by participant group.**

Summary

        This chapter presented the findings based on the data that were collected by

individual interviews, surveys, and focus group interviews with administrators, teachers,

and parents. The findings were presented in two sections, in the order of the research

questions. The first section included the perceptions of the administrators, teachers, and

parents. Each group of the participants was presented in eight parts. Seven of these

corresponded to the attributes of effective elementary bilingual education programs that

have been identified by researchers in various isolated studies (August & Hakuta, 1998;

Howard et al., 2003; Rennie, 1993; Robledo Montecel, Cortez, & Cortez, 2002). The

eighth part corresponded to additional themes that emerged from the individual

interviews, surveys, and focus group interviews. The second section described the

differences and similarities of perceived attributes and emergent themes between each

group of participants. Chapter VI provides a summary of the findings, conclusions,

recommendations, and implications.

CHAPTER VI: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS,
RECOMMENDATIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS


Introduction

Chapter V provided a detailed analysis of the individual interview, survey, and

focus group interview data regarding the attributes of an effective elementary bilingual

education program as perceived by administrators, teachers, and parents. The research

findings of this study are summarized in this concluding chapter. The first section

provides a brief summary of the research conducted in completing this study. The second

section presents a summary of the findings based on the research questions that guided

the study. The third section focuses on the conclusions that were derived from this study.

The fourth section offers recommendations for practice and the fifth section offers

implications for further research. The chapter concludes with a summary.


Summary of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the perceptions of administrators,

teachers, and parents regarding the attributes of an effective elementary bilingual

education program. For the purpose of this study, it was not necessary for the

administrators, teachers, and parents to be stakeholders in an elementary bilingual

education program that was effective. Rather, the focus of this study was the examination

of the attributes that the stakeholders perceived to be important to the relative

effectiveness of their program.

Elementary bilingual education was the focus of this study because researchers have found that English Language Learners do better academically over the long-term if they participate in effective elementary bilingual education programs at the start of their school careers (Strozer, 1994; Thomas & Collier, 2001). The salient attributes of effective elementary bilingual education programs have been identified by researchers in various isolated studies (August & Hakuta, 1998; Howard et al., 2003; Rennie, 1993; Robledo Montecel, Cortez, & Cortez, 2002). These attributes were holistically combined in this study to provide a comprehensive framework through which the perceptions of the administrators, teachers, and parents were examined. In addition, educational leadership has been shown to have a positive effect on student achievement (Leithwood et al., 2004; Marzano et al., 2005). Through an examination of the perceptions of administrators, teachers, and parents regarding the factors that influence the early academic achievement of English Language Learners, the results of this study can assist educational leaders in the formulation of effective policy and practice to create equity and excellence for all students.

The following research questions were the focus of this study:

1. What are the perceived attributes of an effective elementary bilingual education program according to parents of elementary bilingual education students, elementary bilingual education teachers, principals of schools with elementary bilingual education programs, the district administrator of the bilingual education program, and the district superintendent?

2. How are the perceived attributes similar or different between administrators, teachers, and parents?

This study employed critical race theory as the methodological and theoretical framework. Guba and Lincoln (1994) contend that the nature of reality is interpreted as something that has been contextually shaped over time and history by a series of social, political, cultural, and economic factors. Critical race theory is unique because its challenge to the ethnic and socioeconomic structures of educational inequality is accompanied by its approach to creating more equitable conditions in schools and society (Yosso, 2002). Critical race theory is an appropriate framework for analyzing the perceptions of administrators, teachers, and parents regarding the attributes of an effective elementary bilingual education program because the majority of English Language Learners in Texas are from the Hispanic ethnic group and the economically disadvantaged socioeconomic class (TEA, 2003).

A collective case study approach (Stake, 2000) involving purposeful sampling (Ritchie et al., 2003) was used as the design in this research study. The district selected was large (more than 50,000 students were enrolled), urban (resided in a county with a population of 650,000 or more), and had a diverse population of students (no ethnic group represented more than 50% of the student population). Parents or guardians of students who had been enrolled in the district's elementary bilingual education program for at least the last three years were asked to participate voluntarily in this study. Teachers who had taught in the district elementary bilingual education program for at least the last three years were asked to participate voluntarily in this study. Principals of

elementary schools that had bilingual educations programs, the administrator of the district bilingual education program, and the superintendent of the district were also asked to participate voluntarily in this study.

Surveys, direct observations, focus group interviews, individual interviews, and document reviews were used to collect data in this research study. A questionnaire from the *Texas Successful School Study* (TEA, 2000b) was adapted and used to collect the perceptions of 10 administrators, 18 teachers, and 46 parents regarding the attributes of an effective elementary bilingual education program. Open, axial, and selective coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1990) were used to analyze the qualitative data that was collected. Direct observations of the classrooms of participating teachers and document reviews of student achievement and demographic data were used to provide the context for the people and places that were studied. Descriptive statistics and graphical analysis were used to examine the quantitative aspects of the survey, direct observation, focus group interview, individual interview, and document review data.

Summary of the Findings

The summary of findings is presented according to the research questions that guided this study. For the first question, the summary of findings is organized by the groups of people who participated in the study. For the second question, the summary of findings is organized by how frequently the participants mentioned an attribute or emergent theme and whether or not the perception was coded as a confirmation or concern.

*Perceived Attributes of an Effective Elementary Bilingual Education Program*

The summary of findings for the first research question is presented in two ways. First, each of the seven attributes of effective elementary bilingual education programs that are supported by the research literature and any emergent themes that were mentioned by each participant group are presented according to how frequently they were mentioned by the participants. Second, whether or not the attribute or emergent theme was perceived as a confirmation or concern is presented. A perception was coded as a confirmation if the attribute or emergent theme was perceived as something that contributed to the success of English Language Learners. A perception was coded as a concern if the attribute or emergent theme was perceived as something that was either not currently present or not working well in the classroom, school, or district.

*Administrator Perceptions*

The perceptions of the principals, director, and superintendent were combined into one administrative category. The administrators perceived program articulation as the most prevalent attribute of an effective elementary bilingual education program. The administrators perceived leadership, vision, and goals and quality people as the second most prevalent attributes. Taken as a whole, the emergent themes were perceived as the third most prevalent attribute by the administrators, followed by the parental and community involvement, district, school, and classroom climate, and curriculum and instruction attributes. The administrators perceived organization, accountability, and

assessment as the least prevalent attribute of an effective elementary bilingual education program.

The administrators perceived funding, staffing, and socioeconomic status as the most prevalent emergent themes of an effective elementary bilingual education program. The administrators perceived materials and translation of materials as the second most prevalent emergent themes. The administrators perceived class size as the least prevalent emergent theme of an effective elementary bilingual education program.

The majority of the administrator responses regarding the attributes were coded as confirmations. For instance, the administrators perceived program articulation and organization, accountability, and assessment as the most confirming attributes. The administrators perceived quality people as the least confirming attribute.

The majority of the administrator perceptions regarding the emergent themes were also coded as confirmations. For example, the administrators perceived class size as the most confirming emergent theme. The administrators perceived funding and socioeconomic status as the least confirming emergent themes.

*Teacher Perceptions*

The teachers perceived program articulation as the most prevalent attribute of an effective elementary bilingual education program. The teachers perceived parental and community involvement, curriculum and instruction, and the emergent themes as the second most prevalent attributes. The teachers perceived quality people, district, school, and classroom climate, and leadership, vision, and goals as the second least prevalent

attributes. The teachers perceived organization, accountability, and assessment as the least prevalent attribute of an effective elementary bilingual education program.

The teachers perceived materials as the most prevalent emergent theme of an effective elementary bilingual education program. The teachers perceived staffing and translation of materials as the second most prevalent emergent themes. The teachers perceived funding and class size as the least prevalent emergent themes of an effective elementary bilingual education program.

With the exception of the organization, accountability, and assessment attribute, the majority of the teacher responses regarding the attributes were coded as confirmations. The teachers perceived curriculum and instruction as the most confirming attribute. The teachers perceived organization, accountability, and assessment as the least confirming attribute.

The majority of the teacher responses regarding the emergent themes were coded as concerns. The teachers perceived class size as the most concerning emergent theme. The teachers perceived materials as the least concerning emergent theme.

*Parent Perceptions*

The parents perceived parental and community involvement as the most prevalent attribute of an effective elementary bilingual education program. The parents perceived district, school, and classroom climate and program articulation as the second most prevalent attributes. Taken as a whole, the emergent themes were perceived as the third most prevalent attribute by the parents. The parents perceived curriculum and instruction

and quality people as the second least prevalent attributes. The parents perceived organization, accountability, and assessment and leadership, vision, and goals as the least prevalent attributes of an effective elementary bilingual education program.

The parents perceived homework as the most prevalent emergent theme of an effective elementary bilingual education program. The parents perceived educational systems, funding, and translation of materials as the second most prevalent emergent themes. The parents perceived class size and materials as the second least prevalent emergent themes. The parents perceived staffing and socioeconomic status as the least prevalent emergent themes of an effective elementary bilingual education program.

With the exception of program articulation, organization, accountability, and assessment, and leadership, vision, and goals attributes, the majority of the parent perceptions regarding the attributes were coded as confirmations. The parents perceived curriculum and instruction as the most confirming attribute. The parents perceived leadership, vision, and goals as the least confirming attribute.

With the exception of homework, educational systems, and translation of materials, the majority of the parent perceptions regarding the emergent themes were coded as confirmations. The parents perceived socioeconomic status as the most confirming emergent theme. The parents perceived homework as the least confirming emergent theme.

*Similarities and Differences of the Perceived Attributes of an Effective Elementary*

*Bilingual Education Program*

The summary of findings for the second research question is presented in four ways. First, the similarities and differences between the most and least prevalent perceived attributes and emergent themes are presented. Second, the similarities and differences between the most confirming and most concerning perceived attributes and emergent themes are presented. A perception was coded as a confirmation if the attribute or emergent theme was perceived as something that contributed to the success of English Language Learners. A perception was coded as a concern if the attribute or emergent theme was perceived as something that was either not currently present or not working well in the classroom, school, or district.

*Most Prevalent Perceived Attributes and Emergent Themes*

There were no attributes or emergent themes that were perceived as the most

prevalent by all three groups. In addition, there were no attributes or emergent themes

that were perceived as the most prevalent by the administrators and parents. The program

articulation attribute was perceived as the most prevalent by administrators and teachers.

The parental and community involvement attribute was perceived as the most prevalent

by teachers and parents. Figure 82 presents the most prevalent perceived attributes and

emergent themes by participant group.

**Teachers**     **Parents**

Parental and
Community
Involvement

*Materials*          *Homework*

Program
Articulation

Leadership, Vision, and Goals

*Funding*

**Participant Group**          *Staffing*
Attribute          **Administrators**
*Emergent Theme*
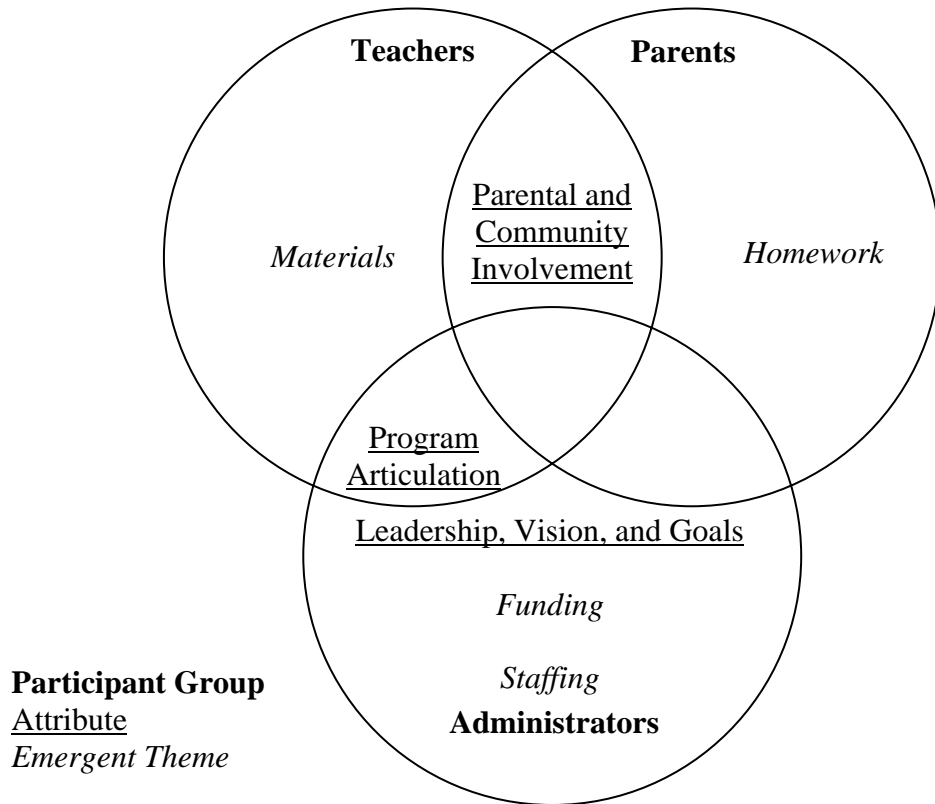
**Figure 82. Most prevalent perceived attributes and emergent themes by participant group.**

*Least Prevalent Perceived Attributes and Emergent Themes*

The organization, accountability, and assessment attribute, translation of materials theme, and class size theme were perceived as the least prevalent by all three groups. The district, school, and classroom climate attribute was perceived as the least prevalent by administrators and teachers. The leadership, vision, and goals and quality people attributes and staffing theme were perceived as the least prevalent by teachers and parents. The curriculum and instruction attribute and materials theme were perceived as the least prevalent by parents and administrators. Figure 83 presents the least prevalent perceived attributes and emergent themes by participant group.
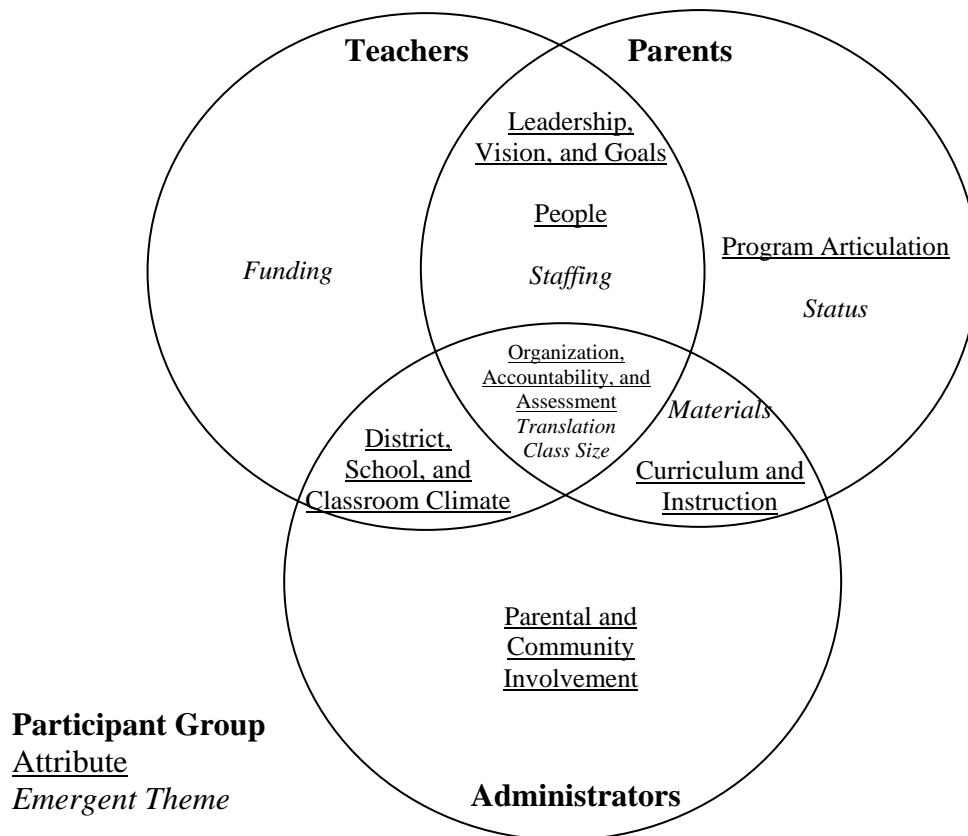


**Figure 83. Least prevalent perceived attributes and emergent themes by participant group.**

*Most Confirming Perceived Attributes and Emergent Themes*

The curriculum and instruction attribute was the only attribute that was perceived as most confirming by all three groups. There were no attributes or emergent themes that were perceived as most confirming by any pair of groups. Figure 84 presents the most confirming attributes and emergent themes by participant group.



**Teachers**

Parental and
Community
Involvement

Quality People

District, School,
and Classroom
Climate

**Parents**

*Materials*

*Status*

Curriculum and
Instruction

Program Articulation

Organization, Accountability,
and Assessment

*Class Size*

**Administrators**

**Participant Group**
Attribute
*Emergent Theme*
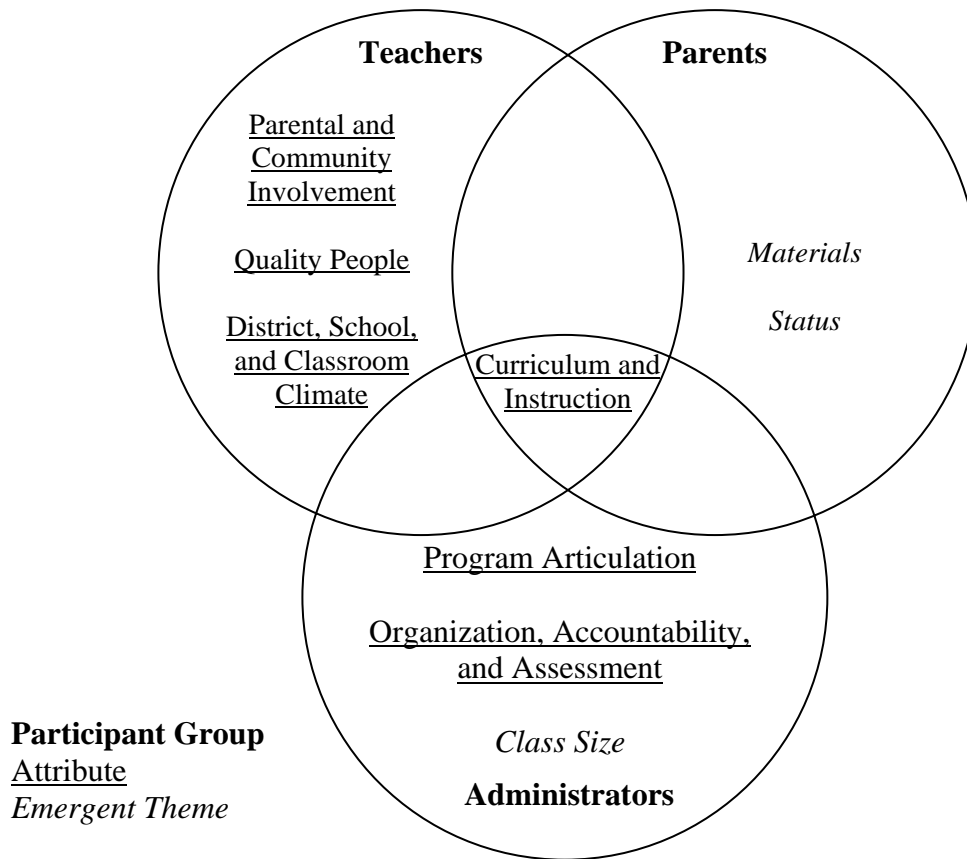
**Figure 84. Most confirming attributes and emergent themes by participant group.**

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*Most Concerning Perceived Attributes and Emergent Themes*

There were no attributes or emergent themes that were perceived as most concerning by all three groups. In addition, there were no attributes or emergent themes that were perceived as most concerning by administrators and parents or administrators and teachers. The organization, accountability, and assessment attribute and the translation of materials theme were perceived as most concerning by the teachers and parents. None of the attributes or emergent themes were perceived as mostly concerning by the administrators. Figure 85 presents the most concerning perceived attributes and emergent themes by participant group.
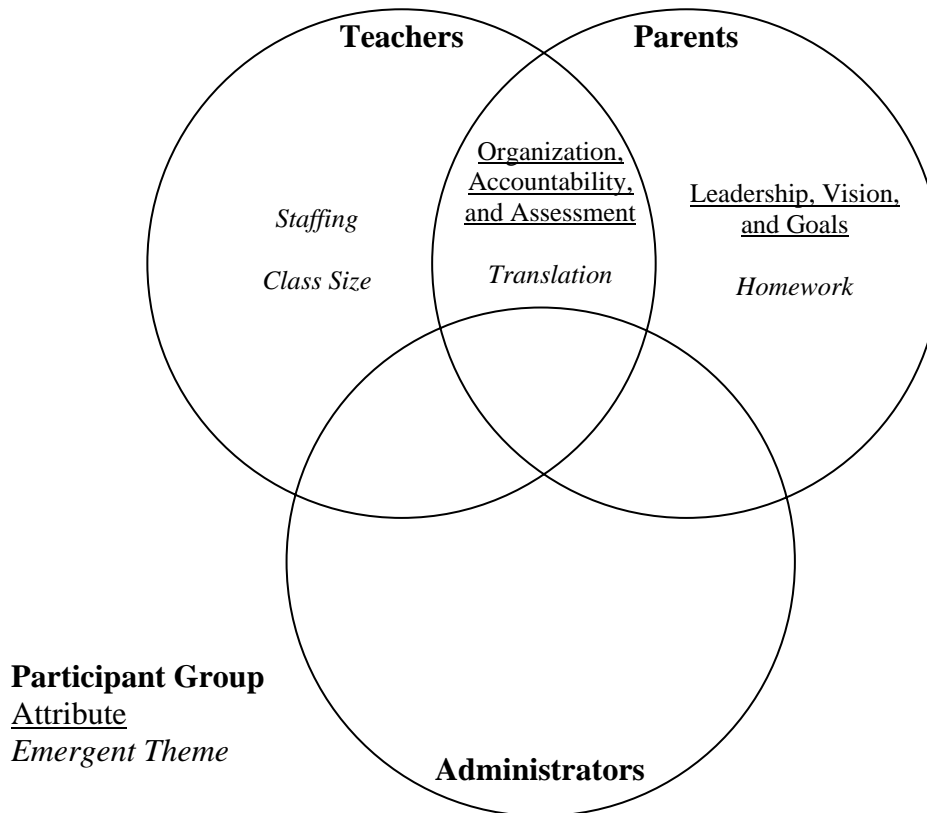
**Figure 85. Most concerning perceived attributes and emergent themes by participant group.**

Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to examine the perceptions of administrators, teachers, and parents regarding the attributes of an effective elementary bilingual education program. The administrators, teachers, and parents identified all seven of the salient attributes of effective elementary bilingual education programs that are supported by the research literature. The participants in the study also identified eight themes that became an additional attribute because they were mentioned with such frequency. Analyses of the data and the application of critical race theory as the methodological and theoretical framework led to three conclusions:

1. The administrator, teacher, and parent perceptions reflect the research-based attributes of effective elementary bilingual education programs.

The attributes of an effective elementary bilingual education program that were perceived by the participants in this study are congruent with seven salient attributes that have been previously identified by research on effective elementary bilingual education programs. These seven attributes include: (a) program articulation; (b) parental and community involvement; (c) district, school, and classroom climate; (d) quality people; (e) curriculum and instruction; (f) leadership, vision, and goals; and (g) organization, accountability, and assessment. While the presence of these attributes may significantly contribute to an effective elementary bilingual education program, their absence may have a detrimental effect on the elementary bilingual education program and the students in the program.

The administrator, teacher, and parent perceptions regarding program articulation are supported by researchers who found that effective elementary bilingual education programs are characterized by the development and maintenance of clearly articulated roles and responsibilities, dynamic two-way communication, and focused and sustained supports between central office and school-level staff that provide strong leadership, credibility, and respect (Howard & Christian, 2002; McLeod, 1996). The participant perceptions regarding program articulation are also consistent with research which found that a common program of instruction that is properly scoped, sequenced, and articulated across grade levels and has been aligned with developmentally appropriate practices and student language proficiency levels in English and the students' native language (McLeod, 1996; Valdez-Pierce & O'Malley, 1992) is an important aspect of an effective bilingual education program.

The perceptions of the participants regarding parental and community involvement are congruent with research which found that when parents and community members know the rationale and the critical components of bilingual programs, they also become strong advocates of the program (E. E. Garcia, 1991; McLeod, 1996; Moll et al., 1992; Robledo Montecel et al., 1993). The participant perceptions regarding parental and community involvement are also supported by researchers who determined that effective elementary bilingual education programs establish partnerships with parents and the community to extend learning into the home and reinforce academic values outside school (Dornbusch & Ritter, 1988; Henderson, 1987). These partnerships are one of the

many effective strategies for overcoming common obstacles to involving parents and community members in the education of English Language Learners.

The administrator, teacher, and parent perceptions regarding district, school, and classroom climate are consistent with prior research which found that educators, students, parents, and community members in effective elementary bilingual education programs place value on the linguistic and cultural background of English Language Learners, hold high expectations for their academic achievement, and ensure their integral involvement in the overall school operation (Lein et al., 1997; Ogbu & Matute-Bianchi, 1986). The participant perceptions regarding district, school, and classroom climate are also congruent with research by Kincheloe and Steinberg (1995) that promotes the development of an education system that is just, empowering, caring, and optimistic.

The perceptions of the participants regarding quality people are supported by research which found that bilingual and monolingual educators in effective elementary bilingual education programs continuously acquire new knowledge regarding best practices in curriculum, instruction, and assessment to improve teaching and learning for English Language Learners (Berman et al., 1995; Milk et al., 1992; Minicucci & Olson, 1992; Olebe, 1999; Villarreal, 1999). The participant perceptions regarding quality people are also consistent with the recommendations of Skrla et al. (2004) in the use equity audits to improve recruitment, placement, professional development, and evaluation processes so that all students have access to a similar level of teacher quality that is independent of their race, class, or language.

The administrator, teacher, and parent perceptions regarding curriculum and instruction are congruent with research on effective elementary bilingual education programs that supports active learning environments that are meaningful, technologically appropriate, and academically challenging (Collier, 1992; Goldenberg & Sullivan, 1994; Lucas et al., 1990; Pease-Alvarez et al., 1991). The participant perceptions regarding curriculum and instruction are also supported by research which found that when teachers supplement explicit skills instruction with student-directed activities such as cooperative learning, partner reading, and collaborative inquiry (Gersten, 1996; Hernández, 1991; Muniz-Swicegood, 1994; Rosebery et al., 1992; Saunders et al., 1996), English Language Learners are more successful.

The perceptions of the participants regarding leadership, vision, and goals are consistent with research which found that educational leaders who are well informed of the rationale for bilingual education and share an active commitment to bilingualism are critical to the effective schooling of English Language Learners. (Carter & Chatfield, 1986; E. E. Garcia, 1991; Goldenberg & Sullivan, 1994; Lucas et al., 1990; Tikunoff et al., 1991). The participant perceptions regarding leadership, vision, and goals are also congruent with research which found that one of the primary roles of leadership in an effective elementary bilingual education program is to create a vision and set of goals with the school community that define high expectations of all students. Furthermore, leaders publish and disseminate these high expectations so that staff, parents, and students can articulate the purpose of the school in their own words (Robledo Montecel, Cortez, Cortez et al., 2002; Villarreal & Solís, 1998).

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The administrator, teacher, and parent perceptions regarding organization, accountability, and assessment are supported by research which found that effective programs use systematic assessment of student achievement to inform ongoing efforts to improve academic success (Carter & Chatfield, 1986; Goldenberg & Gallimore, 1991; Goldenberg & Sullivan, 1994; Slavin & Madden, 2001; Slavin & Yampolsky, 1991). The participant perceptions regarding organization, accountability, and assessment are also consistent with the research of McLeod (1996) and Villarreal (1998) in that they recognized the need for strong accountability for the success of all students.

2. Effective elementary bilingual education programs ensure that issues concerning materials, staffing, translation of materials, funding, socioeconomic status, homework, educational systems, and class size are appropriately addressed.

The administrator, teacher, and parent perceptions regarding materials, staffing, and funding are consistent with research which found that (a) the more efficient use of personnel, time, and information; (b) the use of budget reallocations; and (c) the phasing in of affordable instructional improvements are effective in improving instructional results (Matthews & Crow, 2003; Miles & Darling-Hammond, 1997; Odden & Busch, 1998). The participant perceptions regarding materials, staffing, and funding are also congruent with the findings in a recent study by Reyes (2003) who found that the strategic hiring of teachers with knowledge of bilingual students improves the teacher resource allocation and alignment process.

The perceptions of the participants regarding class size are consistent with research which suggests that smaller classes produce substantial improvement in early

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learning on the achievement of minority children (Mosteller, 1995). The participant

perceptions regarding the translation of materials are congruent with research that

recommends the creation of (a) resources to fund and support the translation of

educational materials on a national, state, and local level, and (b) a periodic, longitudinal

assessment to determine the overall adequacy of the materials being produced (Colina &

Sykes, 2004).

The administrator, teacher, and parent perceptions regarding socioeconomic status

are supported by research which found that high socioeconomic status English Language

Learners outperform low socioeconomic status fluent English speakers on tests of math

and perform just as well on tests of reading (Abedi, 2003; Cobo-Lewis, Pearson, Eilers,

& Umbel, 2002; Krashen & Brown, 2005). While many of the factors associated with

low socioeconomic status are beyond the control of the educational system, Krashen and

Brown (2005) contend that achievement can be raised by providing a print-rich

environment as well as providing education in the native language to supply literacy and

background knowledge.

The perceptions of the participants regarding homework are supported by research

which suggests that homework may force parents into unwanted roles that strain, at least

temporarily, family relations (Varenne & McDermott, 1999). Other research on

homework suggests that it may also trouble family relationships by reducing the time

families have available for participating in leisure activities (Kralovec & Buell, 2000). On

the other hand, the participant perceptions regarding homework are also supported by a

study by Clark (1993) who found that parent knowledge about homework assignments

and parent perceptions of their child's engagement in homework are two of the four variables that account for 47% of the variation between low- and high-achieving students.

The administrator, teacher, and parent perceptions regarding educational systems are supported by research that suggests that parents who have different ideas about the role of the parent and the school in the education of their children may be perceived by administrators and teachers as being uninvolved in the educational lives of their children (G. Lopez, 2001). The participant perceptions regarding educational systems are also supported by Valdés (1996) who suggests that efforts to involve parents of English Language Learners must take into account social inequalities, educational ideologies, educational structures, and interpersonal interactions.

3. The perceptions of administrators, teachers, and parents are more different than similar regarding the most prevalent, confirming, and concerning attributes and emergent themes. However, the perceptions are more similar than different regarding the least prevalent attributes and emergent themes.

None of the research-based attributes or emergent themes were perceived as the most prevalent or concerning. Curriculum and instruction is the most confirming attribute of an effective elementary bilingual education program. This is consistent with research that has found that the perceptions of administrators, teachers, and parents are generally supportive of instructional strategies that are used to educate English Language Learners (Barrera, Vang, Liu, & Thurlow, 2005; Lee, 2006; Maxwell-Jolly, 2000; Thurlow, Albus, Shyyan, Liu, & Barrera, 2004).

Translation of materials, class size, and organization, accountability, and assessment are additional attributes of an effective elementary bilingual education program. The participant perceptions regarding translation of materials are consistent with results from a recent survey which found that 47% of survey respondents reported that the parents "never" or "rarely" receive written information from the school or district translated into their native language (AC&NYIC, 2004). The participant perceptions regarding translational of materials are also consistent with research on cultural responsive practices that build bridges between academic learning and students' prior understanding, knowledge, native language, and values (Gay, 2000; Ginsberg, 2000; Sheets, 1995; Waxman & Tellez, 2002).

The perceptions of the participants regarding class size are consistent with research which suggests that smaller classes produce substantial improvement in early learning on the achievement of minority children (Mosteller, 1995). The participant perceptions regarding class size are also consistent with research that recommends the formation of district-wide policies that establish concrete goals and set clear priorities on use of funds for class size reduction (O'Connell & Smith, 2000).

The participant perceptions regarding organization, accountability, and assessment are consistent with research that suggests that standardized testing may do more harm than good to English Language Learners unless appropriate measures are taken (Antunez, 2003; Valencia et al., 2001). Several of the issues regarding organization, accountability, and assessment include the inconsistency in English Language Learner classification across and within states (Abedi, 2003) and the

measurement quality of accountability instruments for English Language Learners (Abedi, 2004).

Recommendations for Practice

The recommendations for practice are based on the holistic combination of the attributes and emergent themes that administrators, teachers, and parents perceived to be part of an effective elementary bilingual education program. Some of the perceptions were confirmations about processes and practices that could be considered strengths while some of the perceptions were concerns about processes and practices that could be considered opportunities for improvement. In order to improve the elementary bilingual education program, it is important to not only build on the identified strengths, but also recognize what improvements need to be made, understand why those improvements are necessary, and determine how best to approach the improvements. The recommendations are presented in three sections: recommendations for administrators, teachers, and parents. The recommendations are presented in a way that addresses the question: What can I do to improve my elementary bilingual education program?

*Recommendations for Administrators*

The first recommendation is for central office administrators to appropriately place and develop campus administrators with elementary bilingual education programs. Parents voiced concerns about the level of understanding that administrators have about the rationale and critical components of an effective elementary bilingual education program. Teachers expressed concerns about the quantity and quality staff who can communicate in the native language of English Language Learners and their families. Even though the administrators were primarily talking about teachers when they conveyed concerns about the improvement of the recruitment, placement, professional development, and evaluation processes, the findings of this study suggest that there is significant room for improvement in the processes that are used for administrators as well. The triangulation of these three concerns creates the potential for situations at elementary bilingual education schools where the campus administrator does not know enough about the program to be an effective leader for the teachers, students, and parents. While it is not essential for a campus administrator of a bilingual program to be fluent in the languages that are spoken at his or her campus, it is important for the administrator to make an effort to learn the languages so that he or she may appropriately communicate with students and parents. Ongoing professional development for campus administrators about bilingual education, the use of data, English as a Second Language (ESL) strategies, and students' cultural and linguistic characteristics that serve as assets to their academic success will also contribute to the effectiveness of the program.

One area that represented a strength of the elementary bilingual education program in this study was that administrators, teachers, and parents expressed confirmations about the strong advocacy that parents had for the program. On the other hand, an area that represented an opportunity for improvement was the perception that not all parents knew the rationale and critical components of the elementary bilingual program. Therefore, the second recommendation for campus and central office administrators is to take advantage of the strong parent advocacy by reaching out to the parents and community to further the creation of what several participants described as a purposeful community. A purposeful community has been defined as "one with the collective efficacy and capability to distribute and use assets to accomplish goals to all community members through agreed-upon processes" (Marzano et al. 2005, p. 99). Each member of the school community needs to share the perception that they can dramatically enhance the effectiveness of the organization. When all members of the school community believe that the collective group can make a difference, the educational leadership needs to reinforce the collective efficacy by recognizing and celebrating the legitimate successes within the school and the community as a whole (Sergiovanni, 2004).

A third recommendation for campus and central office administrators is to build on the strength of the parent advocacy by increasing opportunities for voice. Several of the participants in this study mentioned that there were limited opportunities for parents to voice their opinions on matters that were important to the education of English Language Learners. A few of the opportunities were considered merely "paper trails" that

the district used to justify decisions that had already been made. Parents of English

Language Learners from various cultural, socioeconomic, and linguistic backgrounds

need to be integrally involved at the planning stages of programs or initiatives that will

affect the elementary bilingual education program (Goldenberg & Gallimore, 1991;

Tikunoff et al., 1991). Parental advocacy also needs to be strengthened in matters that are

related to school success but take place outside the school walls. Community education

programs that provide parental information, social service referrals, lending libraries,

meeting places, and translation services are necessary to help parents be advocates in

their broader community.

A fourth recommendation for campus and central office administrators is to

disaggregate accountability performance data by race, income group, and language in

order to determine where inequities reside on state and local accountability tests. An area

that was perceived as a strength by the administrators, teachers, and parents was the

promotion of high expectations of academic success for all students. On the other hand,

one of the areas that was perceived as an opportunity for improvement was strong

accountability for the success of all students. This equity audit of achievement data (Skrla

et al., 2004) needs to be a collaborative process that includes administrators, teachers,

parents, and other community members. The analysis needs to determine why the

inequitable patterns are happening, what are the factors that are causing them, and where

the problems begin within the educational system. A collaborative solution needs to be

devised, implemented, and monitored by the stakeholders. If the solution works,

stakeholders need to celebrate the success and then focus on the next inequitable area. If

the solution does not work, more analysis into the patterns and sources of inequity needs to be collaboratively completed.

A fifth recommendation for district administrators is to evaluate the implications of extending the bilingual education program into the secondary school program. Collier (2001) suggests that a minimum of four to seven years may be required by English Language Learners to acquire sufficient proficiency in English, regardless of the type of program or the language and social backgrounds of the students. In the state of Texas, Spanish versions of the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) are only available in grades three, four, five, and six. Several of the administrators, teachers, and parents in this study mentioned the lack of support English Language Learners received after graduating from the elementary school as well as the pressure adults experienced in moving the students to proficiency in English so that the students would be successful with TAKS past the sixth grade. The extension of the elementary bilingual education program into the middle and high school grades could provide the support that English Language Learners desperately need in order to be successful. The development of a secondary bilingual education program is especially important for older English Language Learners who begin their schooling in Texas without the benefit of participating in an elementary bilingual education program.

*Recommendations for Teachers*

While the administrator, teacher, and parent perceptions of curriculum and instruction were some of the most confirming perceptions in the entire study, there are several recommendations that teachers can implement to improve the effectiveness of the elementary bilingual education program. Therefore, the first recommendation for teachers is to implement instructional models such as the Sheltered Instruction Observational Protocol (SIOP) that have shown to be highly effective with educating English Language Learners. SIOP is an approach for teaching content to English Language Learners in strategic ways that make the subject matter concepts comprehensible while promoting the students' English language development (Echevarria, Vogt, & Short, 2004). The SIOP model incorporates research-based instructional strategies that have a high probability of enhancing student achievement for all students in all subjects at all grade levels (Echevarria et al., 2004). Four of the instructional strategies that have been found to have the greatest positive affect on student achievement include generating and testing hypothesis (Hattie, Biggs, & Purdie, 1996), summarizing and note taking (Rosenshine, Meister, & Chapman, 1996), nonlinguistic representations (Walberg, 1999), and cooperative learning (Gersten, Baker, & Marks, 1998). It is important for the stakeholders of an effective elementary bilingual education program to understand the components of an instructional model and modify the model so that it matches the needs of the learning community and the individual learners.

A second recommendation for teachers is to build ongoing relationships with parents by reaching out through their native language. The translation of materials theme

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was perceived as concerning by teachers and parents while it was perceived as confirming by administrators. The parent perceptions regarding the language proficiency of teachers and the level of native language support in general were both mostly concerning. While the school or district may have improved their efforts to provide translations of essential documents for teacher, student, and parent use, the perceptions of the parents and teachers indicate that there is still room for improvement. Teachers should participate in an equity audit of instructional materials (Skrla et al., 2004) so that the quantity and quality of materials that are available in the native language of English Language Learners can be determined and an equitable distribution of resources can be developed for the future.

A third recommendation for teachers is to promote a philosophy of curriculum and instruction that capitalizes on the strengths of each child and views cultural ways of learning as resources rather than deficits. These were two components that parents and administrators perceived to be confirming but teachers perceived to be concerning. These perceptions are supported by research on culturally responsive practices that suggest that curricula should reinforce and value cultural knowledge of students rather than ignore or negate it (Demmert & Towner, 2003; Hollins, 1996). Culture encompasses the ways students organize and interpret the world around them as well as the way events are perceived based on established social norms. By learning more about their students, teachers can connect the customs, lifestyle, and traditions that students bring to the classroom with the knowledge and skills that need to be taught in order for students to reach competency on local, state, and national standards. Potential discipline problems

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can also be avoided when teachers and students have a better understanding of the behaviors and attitudes that are acceptable in different cultures.

*Recommendations for Parents*

While the administrators, teachers, and parents in this study perceived parents to be strong advocates of the program, there was a concern from each participant group that the parents did not know the rationale and the critical components of the elementary bilingual education program. The first recommendation for parents is to gain a better understanding of the elementary bilingual education program. A study on linguistic minority parents' perceptions and views on bilingual education (Lee, 1999) confirmed that although many parents indicated that they knew or understood the objectives of bilingual education, only a few (6 out of 290 subjects) really knew the different models or programs of bilingual education. If the school or district does not provide enough information about the program in the native language of the parent, parents should ask for this information to be provided in a language that they can understand. Parents should ask questions about the program, especially in regards to the location of schools, transportation, assessment, availability of special services, and other important topics. Parents should organize with other parents of children who are in the bilingual and monolingual programs so that they can compare notes and ask for advice from those who may have had similar experiences. Parents can also seek the support of advocate groups which can assist parents with problems that they are unable to resolve on their own with the school or district.

The second recommendation for parents is to continue to support their children's education through their family and informal social networks. This component of the parental and community involvement attribute was perceived as very confirming by administrators, teachers, and parents. These perceptions are supported by research that found that parents who rarely went to functions at the school perceived themselves as being highly involved in the educational lives of their children (G. Lopez, 2001). Parents in the study reported taking their children at an early age to work with them and giving their children advice as to the limited opportunities available if they did not continue their formal education. By combining the parent, teacher, and administrator recommendations into a collaborative partnership, there is a greater likelihood that a school or district will be able to implement an effective elementary bilingual program that will provide equity and excellence for English Language Learners.

Implications for Future Research

The results of this study not only contributed to several recommendations for practice but also suggest several implications for future research. The implications are related to potential participant groups, the potential language barrier between researcher and participants, differences between various types of elementary bilingual education programs within a district, and the differences in demographics between and within districts.

The participants in this study were limited to the administrators of the elementary bilingual education program, teachers who had taught in the program for at least three

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years, and parents of children who had been enrolled in the program for at least three years. Future research about the perceived attributes of effective elementary bilingual education programs could include administrators of elementary monolingual education programs, monolingual teachers, and parents of children who are enrolled in elementary monolingual education programs. The inclusion of students who are currently enrolled in or who have recently exited an elementary bilingual education program and parents of eligible English Language Learners who denied bilingual services could also be included in future research. School board members, paraprofessionals, business people, and members of the higher education community could be another potential group of participants. The perspectives of these various participant groups regarding the attributes of an effective elementary bilingual education program could prove to be enlightening for researchers and practitioners.

The language barrier between the researcher and the parents of English Language Learners was addressed in this study in various ways. All written documentation was translated into English and Spanish. The research assistant communicated with potential parent participants on the telephone in English and Spanish. An interpreter was used at each parent focus group interview so that the questions and responses were interpreted into English and Spanish. Future research about the perceived attributes of effective elementary bilingual education programs could include researchers who are fluent in the languages that are spoken by the participants. Additional means of contacting potential participants such as written surveys, phone interviews, and home visits could also be

used. More opportunities for interaction and fewer barriers to conversational communication could provide researchers with a richer set of data.

This study identified a few differences between the teachers of the two-way immersion program and the teachers of the transitional bilingual education program in the district. The two-way immersion program was in place at only one of the eight schools and was only being implemented by a few teachers at each grade level at that school. Future research about the perceived attributes of different types of effective elementary bilingual education programs could include the study of perceptions of monolingual, transitional bilingual, and two-way immersion administrators, teachers, parents, and students at one or more schools that have at least one of the programs.

The district that provided the context for this study was large, urban, and diverse. The schools within the district that had elementary bilingual education programs were very similar in their size, location, and demographic configuration. Future research about the perceived attributes of effective elementary bilingual education programs could include districts of different size, location, and percentages of ethnic and socioeconomic diversity. Future research could also include schools within a district that have elementary bilingual education programs that are dissimilar in their size, location, and demographic configuration.

Summary

This study examined the perceptions of administrators, teachers, and parents regarding the attributes of an effective elementary bilingual education program. Utilizing a qualitative multiple case study with a critical race theory approach, the study focused on the similarities and differences between the participants as they related to the education of elementary English Language Learners. This study supported the majority of the components that made up the attributes of effective elementary bilingual education programs that have been identified through current research. This study also supplemented the existing research with additional themes that emerged from the individual interviews, surveys, and focus group interviews. The results of this study can assist educational leaders in the formulation of effective policy and practice to create equity and excellence for all students.

APPENDIX A. District Elementary Bilingual Education Program

## English/Spanish Language Development Model

**Enter at PK-K**
→ PK-K Spanish: Reading and Math ESL: all other subjects
→ First Grade Spanish: Reading and Math ESL: all other subjects
→ Second Grade Spanish: Reading and Math ESL: all other subjects *Transition by Jan
→ Third Grade ESL all subjects

**Enter at 1st Grade**
→ First Grade Spanish: Reading and Math ESL: all other subjects
→ Second Grade Spanish: Reading and Math ESL: all other subjects
→ Third Grade Spanish: Reading ESL all other subjects *Transition by Jan
→ Fourth and Fifth Grades ESL all subjects

**Enter at 2nd Grade**
→ Second Grade Spanish: Reading and Math ESL: all other subjects
→ Third Grade Spanish: Reading ESL: all other subjects
→ Fourth and Fifth Grades ESL all subjects

**Enter at 3rd Grade**
→ Third Grade Spanish: Reading and Math ESL: all other subjects *Transition may occur
→ Fourth and Fifth Grades ESL: all subjects with Spanish support

**Enter at 4th or 5th**
→ Fourth and Fifth Grades ESL all subjects with Spanish support

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# Spanish Language Arts Course of Study

| | |
|---|---|
| **Kindergarten** | • Recognizes own name<br>• Listens and responds to literature in Spanish<br>• Notices environmental print<br>• Distinguishes between letter, word and sentence boundaries<br>• Identifies vowel and consonant sounds<br>• Produces syllables to begin to read<br>• Makes predictions about stories and events<br>• Uses illustrations to tell stories<br>• Participates in reading pattern books and familiar books |
| **First Grade** | • Knows most letters and sounds in Spanish<br>• Retells main idea of text<br>• Applies letter-sound correspondences (n, rr, ll, and ch)<br>• Decodes words<br>• Uses structural cues (-mente, - ito, - ada)<br>• Notices punctuation when reading<br>• Recognizes high frequency words in and out of text<br>• Reads books with word patterns<br>• Responds appropriately to text in a variety of ways<br>• Begins to read new instructional leveled text<br>• Retells stories in sequence |
| **Second Grade** | • Students read and write independently<br>• Responds appropriately and courteously to directions and questions<br>• Connects experiences and ideas with those of others through speaking and listening<br>• Gains increasing control of grammar when speaking such as using subject- verb agreement, complete sentences, and correct tense<br>• Decides words using knowledge of all Spanish sounds, letters, and syllables, including consonants, vowels, blinds, and stress<br>• Uses knowledge of word order (syntax) and content to support word identification and confirm word meaning<br>• Develops vocabulary by listening to and discussing both familiar and conceptually challenging selections read aloud<br>• Draws and discusses visual images based on text descriptions |

# Spanish Language Arts Course of Study

| | |
|---|---|
| **Third Grade** | • Determines the purpose for listening such as to get information, to solve problems, and to enjoy and appreciate<br>• Asks and answers relevant questions and make contributions in small or large group discussions<br>• Uses vocabulary to describe clearly ideas, feelings, and experiences<br>• Uses root words and other structural cues such as prefixes, suffixes, and derivational endings to recognize words<br>• Reads orally from familiar texts with fluency (accuracy, expression, appropriate phrasing, and attention to punctuation<br>• Demonstrates knowledge of synonyms, antonyms, and multi-meaning words (for example, by sorting, classifying, and identifying related words<br>• Identifies similarities and differences across tests such as in topics, characters, and themes |
| **Fourth Grade** | • Reads silently with increasing ease for longer periods<br>• Uses dictionaries, glossaries for word meaning and pronunciation<br>• Reads from varied sources such ad novels, textbooks, newspapers, and magazines for pleasure and for information<br>• Compares and contrasts themes and issues across text<br>• Identifies purposes of different types of texts<br>• Understands and identifies terms of literary analysis<br>• Produces research projects<br>• Writes legibly<br>• Capitalizes and punctuates correctly including guion (hyphen) and raya (for dialogue)<br>• Writes with accurate spelling of syllabic constructions such as closed, open, "qu" together, using n before v, m before b, m before p, changing z to c when adding - es, and dipthongs<br>• Writes in narrative, classificatory, comparison, and persuasive forms<br>• Spells accurately using accent marks in the final draft<br>• Uses available technology to "publish" pieces |
| **Fifth Grade** | • Reads silently with increasing ease for longer periods<br>• Draws inferences such as conclusions or generalizations and support them with text evidence and experience<br>• Represents text information in different ways such as in outline, timeline, or graphic organizers<br>• Judges the internal consistency or logic of texts<br>• Analyzes characters<br>• Uses multi-reference aids such as thesaurus, dictionaries, and multimedia to clarify meaning and usage<br>• Produces research projects<br>• Writes exhibiting an identifiable voice in personal narratives and stories<br>• Spells accurately using accents and dieresis marks in the final draft<br>• Employs standard Spanish grammar in increased complexity and verb terms appropriate and consistently<br>• Produces communications using technology or appropriate media such as a class newspaper, multimedia reports or video reports |

APPENDIX B. Consent Forms

Title: Attributes of Effective Elementary Bilingual Education Programs:
An Examination of Parent, Teacher, and Administrator Perceptions

Conducted By: Tim Miller of the University of Texas at Austin
Department of Educational Administration, Telephone: 210-###-####, e-mail:
tmiller@mail.utexas.edu

You are being asked to participate in a research study. This form provides you with information about the study. The person in charge of this research will also describe this study to you and answer all of your questions. Please read the information below and ask any questions you might have before deciding whether or not to take part. Your participation is entirely voluntary. You can refuse to participate without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You can stop your participation at any time. To do so simply tell the researcher you wish to stop participation. The researcher will provide you with a copy of this consent for your records.

**The purpose of this study** is to examine the perceptions of parents, teachers, and administrators regarding the attributes of effective elementary bilingual education programs.

**If you agree to be in this study, we will ask you to do the following things:**
- You will be asked to participate in a focus group interview at the campus where your children are enrolled.
- The focus group interview will be used to collect data on the perceptions of parents regarding the attributes of effective elementary bilingual education programs.
- A translator who is familiar with the purpose of the study will be employed by the researcher to translate the questions and responses into English and Spanish.
- The focus group interview will also be audio taped and transcribed.

**Total estimated time to participate** in study is 90 minutes.

**Risks and Benefits** of being in the study
- This study may involve risks that are currently unforeseeable.
- While strict confidentiality will be maintained throughout this study, there is a minimal risk to the loss of confidentiality of your responses.
- The anticipated benefit for the participants who read the results of this research project is that they will improve their ability to identify the attributes that lead to the creation of effective elementary bilingual education programs.

**Compensation:**
- A light dinner will be provided during the focus group interview

**Confidentiality and Privacy Protections:**
- Interview tapes will be coded so that no personally identifying information is visible on them.
- Pseudonyms for the people, schools, and districts participating in this study will be used in the final report to maintain anonymity.

- The people employed to transcribe the audio tapes will sign an agreement of confidentiality before beginning any work on this project.
- Tapes will be kept in a locked file cabinet in the investigator's office.
- Tapes will be heard or viewed only for research purposes by the investigator and his or her associates.
- Tapes will be erased after they are transcribed or coded
- The data resulting from your participation may be made available to other researchers in the future for research purposes not detailed within this consent form. In these cases, the data will contain no identifying information that could associate you with it, or with your participation in any study.

The **records** of this study will be stored securely and kept confidential. Authorized persons from The University of Texas at Austin, members of the Institutional Review Board, and (study sponsors, if any) have the legal right to review your research records and will protect the **confidentiality** of those records to the extent permitted by law. All publications will exclude any information that will make it possible to identify you as a subject. Throughout the study, the researchers will notify you of new information that may become available and that might affect your decision to remain in the study.

**Contacts and Questions:** If you have any questions about the study please ask now. If you have questions later or want additional information, call the researchers conducting the study. Their names, phone numbers, and e-mail addresses are at the top of this page. If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, complaints, concerns, or questions about the research please contact Lisa Leiden, Ph.D., Chair of The University of Texas at Austin Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects, (512) 471-8871 or email: orsc@uts.cc.utexas.edu.

*You will be given a copy of this information to keep for your records.*

**Statement of Consent:**

I have read the above information and have sufficient information to make a decision about participating in this study. I consent to participate in the study.


Signature:_____ Date: _____

_____ Date: _____
Signature of Person Obtaining Consent


Signature of Investigator:_____ Date: _____

Título: Atributos de Programas Eficaces de Educación Bilingüe de Primaria:
Un examen de las percepciones de padres, maestros y administradores

Conducido por: Tim Miller de la Universidad de Texas en Austin
Department of Educational Administration, Teléfono: 210-###-####, e-mail:
tmiller@mail.utexas.edu

Solicitamos su participación en un estudio para una investigación. Este formulario le proporciona la información sobre el estudio. La persona encargada de esta investigación también le describirá este estudio y le contestará todas sus preguntas. Por favor lea la información que sigue y haga todas las preguntas que pueda tener antes de decidir si participar o no. Su participación es totalmente voluntaria. Usted puede negarse a participar sin consecuencias o pérdida de beneficios a los que de otra manera usted tenga derecho. Usted puede dejar de participar en cualquier momento. Para hacerlo,  simplemente dígale al investigador que desea dejar de participar. El investigador le suministrará una copia de este consentimiento para sus archivos.

**El propósito de este estudio** es examinar las percepciones de padres, maestros y administradores en lo que respecta a los atributos de los programas eficaces de educación bilingüe de primaria.

**Si usted acuerda participar en este estudio, le pediremos que haga lo siguiente:**
- Se le pedirá que participe en una entrevista del grupo a analizar en el plantel en el que sus hijos están matriculados.
- La entrevista del grupo a analizar será utilizada para reunir datos de las percepciones de los padres de familia en lo que respecta a los atributos de los programas eficaces de educación  bilingüe de primaria.
- El investigador empleará a un traductor familiarizado con el propósito del estudio para que traduzca las preguntas y respuestas al inglés y al español.
- La entrevista del grupo a analizar será grabada y transcrita.

**Se estima que el tiempo total de participación** en el estudio será de 90 minutos.

**Riesgos y Beneficios** de ser parte del estudio
- Este estudio puede implicar riesgos que actualmente son imprevistos.
- Aunque se mantendrá absoluta reserva durante todo el estudio, hay un mínimo de riesgo de que se pierda la confidencialidad de sus respuestas.
- El beneficio previsto para los participantes que lean los resultados de este proyecto de investigación es que mejorará su capacidad de identificar los atributos que conducen a la creación de programas eficaces de educación bilingüe de primaria.

**Compensación:**
- Se ofrecerá una cena ligera durante la entrevista del grupo a analizar

**Protecciones de confidencialidad y privacidad:**
- Las cintas de las entrevistas serán codificadas para que no tengan información personal visible e identificable en ellas.

- En el informe final se usarán seudónimos para las personas, escuelas y distritos que participen en este estudio para conservar su anonimato.
- Las personas empleadas para transcribir las grabaciones firmarán un acuerdo de confidencialidad antes de comenzar a trabajar en este proyecto.
- Las cintas se mantendrán en un fichero con llave en la oficina del investigador.
- Las cintas serán escuchadas o vistas solamente para fines de la investigación por el investigador y sus asociados.
- Las cintas serán borradas después de ser transcritas o codificadas.
- Los datos que se obtengan de su participación pueden ser puestos a disposición de otros investigadores en el futuro para fines de investigaciones no detalladas en este formulario de consentimiento. En estos casos, los datos no contendrán información identificable que pueda ser asociada con usted o con su participación en ningún estudio.

Los **documentos** de este estudio se guardarán con seguro y se mantendrán confidenciales. Las personas autorizadas de la Universidad de Texas en Austin, miembros de la Institutional Review Board y (patrocinadores del estudio, de haberlos) tienen el derecho legal de revisar los documentos de su investigación y protegerán la **confidencialidad** de éstos hasta donde permita la ley. Todas las publicaciones excluirán cualquier información que hiciera posible que lo identificaran como participante. Durante todo el estudio, los investigadores le notificarán acerca de nueva información que pueda llegar a estar disponible y que pudiera afectar su decisión de continuar en el estudio.

**Contactos y preguntas:** Si usted tiene preguntas sobre el estudio, por favor hágalas ahora. Si tiene preguntas después o desea información adicional, llame a los investigadores que estén conduciendo el estudio. Sus nombres, números de teléfono y direcciones electrónicas están en la parte superior de esta página. Si tiene preguntas sobre sus derechos como participante de una investigación, o si tiene quejas, inquietudes o preguntas sobre la investigación, por favor comuníquese con Lisa Leiden, Ph.D., Chair of The University of Texas at Austin Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects, (512) 471-8871 o email: orsc@uts.cc.utexas.edu.

*A usted se le entregará una copia de esta información para sus archivos.*

**Afirmación de Consentimiento:**

Yo he leído la información de arriba y tengo suficiente información para tomar la decisión de participar en este estudio. Yo consiento participar en el estudio.


Firma:_____          Fecha: _____

_____          Fecha: _____
Firma de la persona que obtiene el Consentimiento



Firma del Investigador:_____          Fecha: _____

Title: Attributes of Effective Elementary Bilingual Education Programs:
An Examination of Parent, Teacher, and Administrator Perceptions

Conducted By: Tim Miller of the University of Texas at Austin
Department of Educational Administration, Telephone: 210-###-####, e-mail:
tmiller@mail.utexas.edu

You are being asked to participate in a research study. This form provides you with information about the study. The person in charge of this research will also describe this study to you and answer all of your questions. Please read the information below and ask any questions you might have before deciding whether or not to take part. Your participation is entirely voluntary. You can refuse to participate without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You can stop your participation at any time. To do so simply tell the researcher you wish to stop participation. The researcher will provide you with a copy of this consent for your records.

**The purpose of this study** is to examine the perceptions of parents, teachers, and administrators regarding the attributes of effective elementary bilingual education programs.

**If you agree to be in this study, we will ask you to do the following things:**
- You will be asked to complete a written survey that will collect the perceptions of teachers regarding the attributes of effective elementary bilingual education programs.
- You will also be asked to be observed by the principal investigator.
- Observations will be used to identify the programs, instructional strategies, and classroom practices that contribute to an effective elementary bilingual education program.

**Total estimated time to participate** in study is 30 minutes for the survey and 30 minutes for the observation.

**Risks and Benefits** of being in the study
- This study may involve risks that are currently unforeseeable.
- While strict confidentiality will be maintained throughout this study, there is a minimal risk to the loss of confidentiality of your responses.
- The anticipated benefit for the participants who read the results of this research project is that they will improve their ability to identify the attributes that lead to the creation of effective elementary bilingual education programs.

**Compensation:**
- One participant will be randomly selected to receive a $30 gift certificate to a local restaurant.

**Confidentiality and Privacy Protections:**
- Pseudonyms for the people, schools, and districts participating in this study will be used in the final report to maintain anonymity.
- The data resulting from your participation may be made available to other researchers in the

future for research purposes not detailed within this consent form. In these cases, the data will contain no identifying information that could associate you with it, or with your participation in any study.

The **records** of this study will be stored securely and kept confidential. Authorized persons from The University of Texas at Austin, members of the Institutional Review Board, and (study sponsors, if any) have the legal right to review your research records and will protect the **confidentiality** of those records to the extent permitted by law. All publications will exclude any information that will make it possible to identify you as a subject. Throughout the study, the researchers will notify you of new information that may become available and that might affect your decision to remain in the study.

**Contacts and Questions:** If you have any questions about the study please ask now. If you have questions later or want additional information, call the researchers conducting the study. Their names, phone numbers, and e-mail addresses are at the top of this page. If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, complaints, concerns, or questions about the research please contact Lisa Leiden, Ph.D., Chair of The University of Texas at Austin Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects, (512) 471-8871 or email: orsc@uts.cc.utexas.edu.

*You will be given a copy of this information to keep for your records.*

**Statement of Consent:**

I have read the above information and have sufficient information to make a decision about participating in this study. I consent to participate in the study.


Signature:_____ Date: _____

_____ Date: _____
Signature of Person Obtaining Consent


Signature of Investigator:_____ Date: _____

Title: Attributes of Effective Elementary Bilingual Education Programs:
An Examination of Parent, Teacher, and Administrator Perceptions

Conducted By: Tim Miller of the University of Texas at Austin
Department of Educational Administration, Telephone: 210-###-####, e-mail:
tmiller@mail.utexas.edu

You are being asked to participate in a research study. This form provides you with information about the study. The person in charge of this research will also describe this study to you and answer all of your questions. Please read the information below and ask any questions you might have before deciding whether or not to take part. Your participation is entirely voluntary. You can refuse to participate without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You can stop your participation at any time. To do so simply tell the researcher you wish to stop participation. The researcher will provide you with a copy of this consent for your records.

**The purpose of this study** is to examine the perceptions of parents, teachers, and administrators regarding the attributes of effective elementary bilingual education programs.

**If you agree to be in this study, we will ask you to do the following things:**
- You will be asked to participate in an individual interview at location that is convenient to you.
- The interview will be used to collect data on the perceptions of administrators regarding the attributes of effective elementary bilingual education programs.
- The interview will be audio taped and transcribed.
- You will be asked to participate in a second interview to review the results of the first interview.
- The second interview will also be audio taped and transcribed.

**Total estimated time to participate** in study is one hour for the first interview and 30 minutes for the second interview.

**Risks and Benefits** of being in the study
- This study may involve risks that are currently unforeseeable.
- While strict confidentiality will be maintained throughout this study, there is a minimal risk to the loss of confidentiality of your responses.
- The anticipated benefit for the participants who read the results of this research project is that they will improve their ability to identify the attributes that lead to the creation of effective elementary bilingual education programs.

**Compensation:**
- There is no compensation for participating in this study.

**Confidentiality and Privacy Protections:**
- Interview tapes will be coded so that no personally identifying information is visible on them.
- Pseudonyms for the people, schools, and districts participating in this study will be used in the final report to maintain anonymity.

- The people employed to transcribe the audio tapes will sign an agreement of confidentiality before beginning any work on this project.
- Tapes will be kept in a locked file cabinet in the investigator's office.
- Tapes will be heard or viewed only for research purposes by the investigator and his or her associates.
- Tapes will be erased after they are transcribed or coded
- The data resulting from your participation may be made available to other researchers in the future for research purposes not detailed within this consent form. In these cases, the data will contain no identifying information that could associate you with it, or with your participation in any study.

The **records** of this study will be stored securely and kept confidential. Authorized persons from The University of Texas at Austin, members of the Institutional Review Board, and (study sponsors, if any) have the legal right to review your research records and will protect the **confidentiality** of those records to the extent permitted by law. All publications will exclude any information that will make it possible to identify you as a subject. Throughout the study, the researchers will notify you of new information that may become available and that might affect your decision to remain in the study.

**Contacts and Questions:** If you have any questions about the study please ask now. If you have questions later or want additional information, call the researchers conducting the study. Their names, phone numbers, and e-mail addresses are at the top of this page. If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, complaints, concerns, or questions about the research please contact Lisa Leiden, Ph.D., Chair of The University of Texas at Austin Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects, (512) 471-8871 or email: orsc@uts.cc.utexas.edu.

*You will be given a copy of this information to keep for your records.*

**Statement of Consent:**

I have read the above information and have sufficient information to make a decision about participating in this study. I consent to participate in the study.


Signature:_____ Date: _____

_____ Date: _____
Signature of Person Obtaining Consent


Signature of Investigator:_____ Date: _____

APPENDIX C. Interview and Survey Questions

Parent Focus Group Questions (English)

1. If you were giving a grade for effectively contributing to the academic success of your children, how would you grade your:

Classroom:  A  B  C  D  F

School:  A  B  C  D  F

District:  A  B  C  D  F

2. What five things contribute the most to the academic success of your children?

3. What five things contribute the least to the academic success of your children?

4. What do you do at home to contribute to your children's success?

5. What is it that the teacher does to contribute to your children's success?

6. How can your children's teacher improve his or her efforts to contribute to the academic success of your children?

7. What is it that the principal does to contribute to your children's success?

8. How can your children's principal improve her efforts to contribute to the academic success of your children?

9. What is it that the district's central office does to contribute to your children's success?

10. In what ways can the district's central office improve their efforts to contribute to the academic success of your children?

11. Please share your views on the use of the first language, Spanish, and the second language, English, in class and home settings.

Parent Focus Group Questions (Spanish)

1. Si usted daba un grado para con eficacia contribuir al éxito académico de sus niños, ¿cómo usted calificaría su escuela?

Clase:    A  B  C  D  F

Escuela: A  B  C  D  F

Zona:    A  B  C  D  F

2. ¿Qué cinco cosas contribuyen el la mayoría al éxito académico de sus niños?

3. ¿Qué cinco cosas contribuyen lo menos al éxito académico de sus niños?

4. ¿Qué hacen en casa con sus niños para contribuir al éxito académico de sus niños?

5. ¿Qué es lo que hace la maestra de su niño para contribuir al éxito académico de sus niños?

6. ¿Cómo puede mejorar su maestro de niños sus esfuerzos de contribuir al éxito académico de sus niños?

7. ¿Qué es lo que hace el director de la escuela para contribuir al éxito académico de sus niños?

8. ¿Cómo puede el principal de sus niños mejorar sus esfuerzos de contribuir al éxito académico de sus niños?

9. ¿Qué es lo que hace el programa bilingüe de la zona de escuela para contribuir al éxito académico de sus niños?

10. Cómo puede el programa bilingüe de la zona de escuela mejorar sus esfuerzos de contribuir al éxito académico de sus niños?

11. Comparta por favor sus opiniones sobre el uso de la primera lengua, Español, y segunda lengua, Inglés, en clase y en casa.

Teacher Survey Questions

1. If you were giving a grade for effectively contributing to the academic success of English Language Learners, how would you grade:

Classroom:      A  B  C  D  F

School:        A  B  C  D  F

District:       A  B  C  D  F

2. What five things contribute the most to the academic success of your English Language Learners?

3. What five things contribute the least to the academic success of your English Language Learners?

4. What approaches/practices do you utilize to ensure the academic success of your English Language Learners?

5. What specific professional development have you received that contributes to the academic development of the English Language Learners in your classroom?

6. What specific professional development do you want to receive that will contribute to the academic development of the English Language Learners in your classroom?

7. What program(s) at your campus contribute to the academic success of your English Language Learners?

8. How can the program(s) your campus be improved to contribute to the academic success of your English Language Learners?

9. In what ways do the parents of English Language Learners contribute to the academic success of your English Language Learners?

10. In what ways can the parents of English Language Learners improve their efforts to contribute to the academic success of your English Language Learners?

11. In what ways does your principal contribute to the academic success of your English Language Learners?

12. In what ways can your principal improve her efforts to contribute to the academic success of your English Language Learners?

13. In what ways does your central office contribute to the academic success of your English Language Learners?

14. In what ways can your central office improve their efforts to contribute to the academic success of your English Language Learners?

15. Please share your views on the use of the first language, Spanish, and the second language, English, in class and home settings.

Campus Administrator Interview Questions

1. If you were giving a grade for effectively contributing to the academic success of English Language Learners, how would you grade your:

Teachers:        A  B  C  D  F

School:          A  B  C  D  F

District:        A  B  C  D  F

2. What five things contribute the most to the academic success of English Language Learners on your campus?

3. What five things contribute the least to the academic success of English Language Learners?

4. What approaches/practices do you utilize through site-based decision-making that contribute to the success of English Language Learners?

5. What specific professional development have you received that contributes to the academic development of the English Language Learners on your campus?

6. What specific professional development do you want to receive that will contribute to the academic development of the English Language Learners on your campus?

7. What makes your teachers successful with their English Language Learners?

8. In what ways can your teachers be more effective with their English Language Learners?

9. What are the most effective ways parents work with the English Language Learners on your campus?

10. In what ways can your parents work more effectively with the English Language Learners on your campus?

11. In what ways does your central office contribute to the success of your English Language Learners?

12. In what ways can your central office improve their efforts to contribute to the academic success of your English Language Learners?

13. Please share your views on the use of the first language, Spanish, and the second language, English, in class and home settings.

District Administrator Interview Questions

1. If you were giving a grade for effectively contributing to the academic success of English Language Learners, how would you grade your:

Schools:          A  B  C  D  F

Department:     A  B  C  D  F

District:          A  B  C  D  F

2. What five things contribute the most to the academic success of English Language Learners in your district?

3. What five things contribute the least to the academic success of English Language Learners in your district?

4. What approaches/practices do you utilize that contribute to the success of English Language Learners in your district?

5. What specific professional development have you received that contributes to the academic development of English Language Learners in your district?

6. What specific professional development do you want to receive that will contribute to the academic development of English Language Learners in your district?

7. What makes teachers successful with English Language Learners in your district?

8. In what ways can teachers be more effective with English Language Learners in your district?

9. What are the most effective ways parents work with English Language Learners in your district?

10. In what ways can parents work more effectively with English Language Learners in your district?

11. In what ways do principals contribute to the success of English Language Learners in your district?

12. In what ways can principals improve their efforts to contribute to the academic success of English Language Learners in your district?

13. In what ways does your central office contribute to the academic success of English Language Learners in your district?

14. In what ways can your central office improve their efforts to contribute to the academic success of English Language Learners in your district?

15. Please share your views on the use of the first language, Spanish, and the second language, English, in class and home settings.

APPENDIX D. Parent Focus Group Invitation Letters

February 13, 2006


Dear Parent or Guardian,


You have been selected to participate in a focus group meeting of parents of children who have been enrolled in the elementary bilingual education program in _____ School District. The focus group is part of a research study that is examining the perceptions of parents, teachers, and administrators regarding the attributes of effective elementary bilingual education programs. I am conducting the research as part of my doctoral studies at the University of Texas at Austin.


As a parent or guardian of a child who has been in the district elementary bilingual program for at least three years, I am eager to hear what you have to say about the program. The focus group meeting will take place at 6:00 PM on Thursday, March 9, 2006. The focus group meeting will be held in the cafeteria of the school your child attends. The meeting will last approximately 90 minutes. A light dinner will be provided before the meeting and childcare will be provided during the meeting. A translator will also be at the meeting so that questions and answers will be translated into English and Spanish.


Please return the enclosed postcard so that I will know how many adults and children to expect at the meeting. If you have any questions about the research, please contact me at ###-#### or tmiller@mail.utexas.edu.


Sincerely,



Tim Miller
Principle Investigator

13 de febrero de 2006

Estimado padre de familia o tutor:

Usted ha sido escogido para participar en una reunión que analizará las percepciones de un grupo de padres de niños que han estado matriculados en el programa de educación bilingüe de _____ School District. El grupo que se analizará es parte de una investigación que examina las percepciones de padres, maestros y administradores en lo que respecta a los atributos de programas eficaces de educación bilingüe. Yo estoy conduciendo la investigación como parte de mis estudios doctorales en la Universidad de Texas en Austin.

Estoy ansioso de saber lo que usted tiene que decir sobre el programa como padre o tutor de un niño/a que ha estado en el programa bilingüe de primaria durante por lo menos tres años. La reunión del grupo que se analizará se llevará a cabo a las 6:00 p.m. el jueves, 9 de marzo de 2006. Tendrá lugar en la cafetería de la escuela a la que asiste su hijo/a. La reunión durará aproximadamente 90 minutos. Se ofrecerá una cena ligera antes de la reunión y habrá cuidado para niños durante la reunión. También estará presente un traductor para que traduzca las preguntas y respuestas tanto al inglés como al español.

Por favor devuelva la tarjeta postal adjunta para así yo saber cuántos adultos y niños estarán en la reunión. Si tiene preguntas acerca de la investigación, sírvase comunicarse conmigo por el ###-#### o por tmiller@mail.utexas.edu.

Atentamente,


Tim Miller
Investigador principal

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VITA

Timothy James Miller was born in Cheverly, Maryland on October 6, 1970, the son of Donna Marie Miller and Richard Albert Miller. After completing his work at Winston Churchill High School, San Antonio, Texas, in 1989, he entered Trinity University in San Antonio, Texas. He received the degree of Bachelor of Arts in Humanities in 1993 and the degree of Master of Arts in Teaching in 1994 from Trinity University. He was employed as a teacher at Hawthorne Elementary School, San Antonio, Texas, in 1994. He entered Trinity University again in 1998 and became employed as a teacher at Coronado Village Elementary School, Converse, Texas. He received the degree of Master of Education in School Administration from Trinity University and became employed with North East Independent School District, San Antonio, Texas, in 1998. He entered the Graduate School of The University of Texas at Austin in 2004.

Permanent Address:   8831 Pineridge Road, San Antonio, Texas 78217

This dissertation was typed by the author.