

Contact Information:

National Association for Bilingual Education
240-450-3700
info@nabe.org

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POSITION STATEMENT ON MARCH 1, 2025 EXECUTIVE ORDER

Designating English as the Official Language of The United States

WASHINGTON, DC, MARCH 3, 2025 — The National Association for Bilingual Education (NABE) firmly opposes efforts to designate English as the official language of the United States, including the most recent Executive Order “Designating English as the Official Language of The United States,” signed March 1, 2025.

This Executive Order ignores and undermines the rich multilingual heritage of our nation. Indigenous languages thrived long before the founding of the United States, as did Spanish, French, and other languages that have also been spoken for centuries. Our nation has always been multilingual, and we must continue to honor and build upon that legacy.

The English Language Executive Order rescinds a federal mandate that required agencies and other recipients of federal funding to provide language assistance to non-English speakers, Executive Order 13166 of August 11, 2000 (“Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency”), issued by then President Bill Clinton. In short, the English Language Executive Order undermines and denigrates the linguistic and cultural diversity that strengthens our communities, economy, and global standing.

NABE’s mission is to advocate for policies that recognize and support bilingualism, multilingual education, and cultural inclusivity. Rather than turning our backs on our multilingual learners, we should embrace and expand opportunities for individuals to thrive in multiple languages—enhancing academic achievement, workforce readiness, and cross-cultural understanding. Bilingualism is good educational policy which provides tangible benefits for students growing up in a multilingual world. In a rapidly globalizing world, bilingualism is an essential economic imperative for the United States to retain its global leadership. At the very moment that educators are recognizing the extraordinary cognitive, academic, and social benefits of dual language instruction, and such programs are growing in popularity throughout the United States, it makes little sense to step back from a national commitment to multilingual education.

NABE stands with educators, families, and communities in affirming that linguistic diversity is fundamental to the fabric of our nation. We call on leaders to reject this Executive Order, on government agency heads to continue providing dual language services, and on all our public officials to promote policies that celebrate and support multilingualism for the benefit of all.

The following NABE Affiliates have signed on in support of this position statement:

- Carolina Association for Bilingual Education
- Florida Association for Bilingual Education
- Florida Association of Bilingual and ESOL Supervisors (FABES)
- Georgia Association of Multilingual and Multicultural Education
- Idaho Association for Bilingual Education
- Illinois Association of Multilingual Multicultural Education
- Michigan Association for Bilingual Education
- Multistate Association for Bilingual Education-Northeast, Inc
- NJTESOL-NJBE
- New Mexico Association for Bilingual Education
- New York State Association for Bilingual Education
- Oklahoma Association for Bilingual Education
- Oregon Association for Bilingual Education
- Puerto Rico Association for Bilingual Education
- South Region Association for Bilingual Education
- Texas Association for Bilingual Education
- Wisconsin Association for Bilingual Education