



Wisconsin Association for Bilingual Education

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September 1, 2019

Dear WIABE members,

It is truly an honor to serve as the new Interim President of WIABE. Over the past two years, I have been working alongside Dr. Juan Báez and our WIABE board in order to move WIABE forward as the flagship bilingual education organization in the state of Wisconsin. Under Dr. Juan Báez' leadership we have worked diligently to build the organizational infrastructure necessary to move the organization to the next level. I am committed to continuing, expanding and accelerating this work over the next year.

Recently, our organization made some significant structural changes to help support this work. We have built a statewide coalition of leaders in the field that is closely working with WIABE to better understand the needs and supports necessary to help expand bilingual education programs across the state. Our board members participated in a retreat, where we looked at our mission and vision closely, and identified specific areas of focus for our statewide work. Through this process, the WIABE board identified two major areas of focus: statewide advocacy and professional development.

Every year, we host a phenomenal conference and organize multiple networking events throughout the state which bring practitioners together to collectively share best practices around bilingual education. Nevertheless, our board would like to expand our work even further by increasing professional development opportunities throughout the state at the same time that we increase our advocacy work around bilingual education issues. It is for this reason that we have made adjustments to our bylaws. Some of the structural changes that we made to the organization includes adding one year to the two year terms that board members serve on the WIABE board, the purpose of this particular change was aimed at increasing the stability of the organization at the same time that we create continuity to the work of WIABE. We also voted to expand our board, because we quickly understood that if we are to embark on this work it would be necessary to increase the workload capacity of the board.

Given the structural changes to the organization as accomplished by the changes to our bylaws as well as the structures that have been put in place over the last couple of years and the statewide supports such as the creation of our statewide action coalition, WIABE now has the ability and the capacity to truly take the organization's efforts to the next level. We are set to become a truly member driven organization focused on expanding our footprint across the state of Wisconsin through our advocacy and professional development work.

It is truly an exciting time for the organization as WIABE is set to become the leading organizational voice around bilingual education issues across the state of Wisconsin. I look forward to working with multiple statewide stakeholders within our organization as we continue to transform WIABE into an organization that helps support bilingual education programs across the state through both advocacy and professional development.

Sincerely,

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Interim President

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Mildred Olson

Recording Secretary

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