Enacting Asset-Based Approaches for Critically Conscious Dual Language Teachers:
The Administrator's Role in a Professional Learning Community

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ABSTRACT

Equity minded administrators must perceive professional learning not only to focus on using strategies that promote language and literacy development for students, but also to address teachers' deficit discourses and assumptions about their students (Molle, 2013; Kolano et al., 2014). Dual Language (DL) teachers and administrators participated in a professional learning community (PLC) to improve the instruction of DL learners by engaging in a critical examination of equity across three districts. The research used a framework to understand the cultural and linguistic assets of students by using a "learning about my students" approach with a focus on the strengths and abilities of their students—rather than deficits. Concurrently, the study examined the leadership role and collaboration of administrators in planning and implementing professional learning with their DL teachers. Results concluded key roles and supports of administrators to participants in the PLC as: 1) examining teacher's critical consciousness, 2) leading with a cultural growth mindset, and 3) commitment to equity in capacity building.

Keywords: dual language education, administrator's role in professional learning, asset-based professional development

Continuous improvement of practices and well-developed professional learning on the academic and proficiency growth of dual language learners (DLLs) is required to advance pedagogy and access for students. Traditional structures of professional development (PD) are perceived as generally passive, inactive, and outdated, as the term *professional development* is broad in range of topics, formats, and outcomes (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017). Historically, most PDs are mandated and planned by outsiders to the school programs with little input from teachers and administrators serving DLLs or prior experience in Dual Language Education (DLE). Poorly planned PDs may yield quick results but fail to align state policies/standards to DLE goals, a key role of an administrator as instructional leader (Weimelt & Welton, 2015) that is generally left to teachers' interpretation. Research indicates that the needs of DLLs is usually neglected in professional development for lack of in-depth professional learning designed specifically for the linguistic needs of students and program options, which likely impacts a stratified segregation in the educational system and a long-term impact of missed postsecondary opportunities (Gándara et al., 2003). This is a major impediment to well-articulated programs for DLE that points to ineffective leadership in schools as poorly planned professional development perpetuates a dysfunctional and biased school culture toward its learners rather than advancing the academic work and social emotional wellbeing of students and teachers (Molle, 2013; Kolano et al., 2014).

California has over 800 DLE programs across the state and plans to double the number of programs and teachers in less than 10 years through the Global California 2030 initiative (California Department of Education, 2019). Given the growing numbers of programs and the rapid hiring of new educators to cope with the demand, it is the administrator's role to examine teachers' biases as a means of ensuring equitable practices centered on students' linguistic and cultural diversity. Therefore, administrators have a need to develop appropriate professional learning communities that allow DLE teachers to collect, analyze, and monitor students' progress with the cultural mindset to challenge unjust and unintended approaches that result in discriminatory and bias implementation of their program, particularly for DLLs (Alfaro & Hernández, 2016). Above all,

leadership requires the administrator to work in collaboration with others to create a shared purpose and vision (Darling-Hammond & Friedlaender, 2008).

This research analyzes the process in which administrators involved dual language teachers in examining their ideology by analyzing their practices in a Professional Learning Community (PLC), including inquiries, lesson studies, reflections, and feedback on implementation of DLE strategies. The research stemmed from a 5-year National Professional Development grant from the US Department of Education (2016-2021) to improve the instructional practices of teachers working with dual language learners within a PLC. Research on how school leadership is related to effective PLCs suggests a strong influence on teacher efficacy and the learning environment in schools (Leithwood et al., 2008; Stoll et al., 2006).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Reconceptualizing a Learning Community

Although empirical research suggests that school leaders can make a difference in improving student achievement, most principals' leadership practices are not focused on student learning, but rather on school administration and management (Rodrigues & Ávila de Lima, 2021). However, the goal of professional learning is to improve teacher practices and student outcomes through collaborative and job-embedded opportunities with teams of educators, including administrators (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017). This allows the development of teacher knowledge and dispositions to collectively advance the language competence and academic achievement of DLLs. Darling-Hammond and colleagues note that an effective professional learning community is one that emphasizes: 1) content-focused strategies, 2) active learning, 3) collaborative environment, 4) a showcase of best practices, 5) coaching and support from peers and leaders, and 6) reflection and feedback.

Equity minded administrators must perceive professional learning not only as a focus on using strategies that promote language and literacy development for students, but also address teachers' deficit discourses and assumptions about their students (Molle, 2013; Kolano et al., 2014). To examine the role of critical consciousness in professional learning, administrators must provide teachers time to discuss research-based practices, examine purpose of strategies, share their students' work, collaborate with colleagues, celebrate their students' achievements, and set goals (Babinski et al., 2018; Green et al., 2013; Walker & Edstam, 2013). The role of the administrator in the professional learning must focus on ensuring equitable pedagogy and a critically conscious examination of instruction and assessments for continuous improvement to accelerate student achievement.

At times, teachers engage in practices that are "cherry-picked" from other contexts (e.g., internet/blogs, trending, borrowed) that may appear to suit others but rarely inquire about the rooted ideologies that may adversely affect student learning outcomes in DLE, consequently these practices may go unchecked by administrators in aligning the program goals (Alfaro & Hernández, 2016; Cadiero-Kaplan & Rodriguez, 2008). As such, it is the administrator's role in professional learning to engage teachers in a critical examination of research, politics, and attitudes that inform practices as it provides a lens for teachers to understand their philosophical stance and engage in efforts that advance student learning and foster equity in school (Bartolomé, 2008; Valenzuela, 2016).

When the leaders and teachers concentrate on asset-based approaches, the emphasis is not on the strengths and weaknesses of a student, but instead focuses on the mindset of building strengths – rather than dwelling on deficits, particularly for our vulnerable populations (Ebersöhn & Eloff, 2006; Pang, 2018; Rhee et al., 2001). An asset-based approach is therefore an "internally focused" caring strategy that concentrates on agenda building and problem-solving capacities of the community and institution (Ebersöhn & Eloff, 2006, p. 462). It is a "bottom-up approach…of relationships that need to be built and rebuilt between individuals through the process of facilitation" (Ebersöhn & Eloff, 2006, p. 462). Therefore, shifting the emphasis from a top-down directive to an empowerment standpoint that embraces critical consciousness for engaged scholarship and leadership. These strength-based approaches lead to checking schoolwide systems for equity that justly serve the school community without undermining the students' best interests and potential to cultivate their talents – languages and cultures (Blankstein & Noguera, 2015; Skutnabb-Kangas et al., 2009). When equity is at the core of the vision and mission of the administrator and its teachers, it can create learning communities committed to framing excellence as the hallmark of success through justness for all students. Such leaders are instrumental in the support and guidance to high quality and equitable programs that advocate for the learning community through a collective vision and mission (Scanlan & López, 2012; Wiemelt & Welton, 2015).

Leading for Critical Consciousness and Equity

According to empirical studies on effective leadership in DLE, principals are second to teachers as the most important factors contributing to student success (DeMatthews & Izquierdo, 2018; Wiemelt & Welton, 2015). Leadership roles from all perspectives must converge at the core of equitable practices in DLE, including a mutual accountability and shared loyalty to the common goals that support the achievement of every student among all stakeholders (Theoharis, 2007). Large body of research supports effective professional preparation of teachers as the difference in the education of low-income English Learners (ELs) who are instructed by teachers with minimum qualifications in comparison to ELs taught by educators with rigorous professional preparations and full bilingual credentials (Gándara et al., 2003).

Blankstein and Noguera (2015) define excellence through equity as courageous leadership through five main principles: 1) core mission and values; 2) common vision and goals; 3) constancy and consistency of purpose; 4) facing facts and fears; and 5) building sustainable relationships rooted in trust, respect, and mutual responsibility (pp. 25-27). These principles are the core of asset-based approaches that develop a caring professional learning community called *Liderazgo* – the act to "acknowledge and critique educational theory and practices that are used to subordinate and marginalize EBLS (Emergent Bilingual Latin@ Students), as well as promise deep and equitable change in social conditions" (Wiemelt & Welton, 2015, p. 85). Entrusting the mission and values to build sustainable programs upholds the goals of biliteracy, bilingualism, and biculturalism for all students, and it sets in motion a critical and conscious examination for ideological clarity that must begin with the leadership. Therefore, as the administrator develops a clear philosophical stance for members of the community, results may lead to fostering common goals and equitable perceptions about teaching and learning for all diverse learners.

In addition, administrators can learn alongside of teachers about language acquisition pedagogy, research-based practices, and state standards to build strong programs and protect the school's public integrity, mainly if their own content knowledge and former training lacked in skills needed to fulfill their DLE instructional leader roles as it may impact their credibility with the community and student outcomes (Martínez, 2022). In summary, the role of leaders working with teachers helps the PLC find purpose and meaning in their efforts by unifying all stakeholders toward a common vision, mission, and goals. The critically conscious leader brings cohesion by establishing an environment premised on trust, respect, and validation of all voices (Amanchukwu et al., 2015; Blankstein et al., 2015).

Conceptual Underpinning

The framework for this inquiry is adapted from the notion of valuing diversity and equity in schools (Pang, 2018), and developing strong trusting and reciprocal relationships between teachers and their students. In addition, this premise involves critically conscious administrators to ensure access and equitable opportunities for all students, but also enacting educational approaches that are congruent with asset-minded ideologies. This presents opportunities for teachers and administrators to examine ideological and pedagogical implications through professional learning inquiry (e.g., planning, implementation, assessments, data results, enacting change). This framework is centered on "learning about my students" (Hernández et al., 2021; Hernández & Daoud, 2022) for both the teacher and administrator to better serve traditionally marginalize and linguistically minoritized student populations by: 1) valuing their cultural and linguistic assets, 2) building knowledge from students' strengths, 3) fostering a caring learning environment that nurtures academic and socioemotional development, and 4) ending blame on students and families for systemic failure (Gay, 2018; Hernández & Daoud, 2022; Pang, 2018). This form of asset-based professional learning embraces cultural differences and the individual strengths of all "our" students as a benefit to the school-community, and places responsibility for excellence in DLE on the equity minded administrator and the critically conscious teachers.

Furthermore, Critical Bilingual Leadership, known as *Liderazgo* (Wiemelt & Welton, 2015) corresponds to how educational leaders can best serve their diversified and changing student populations by interrogating ways to create a more culturally and linguistically responsive school. The *Liderazgo* framework includes the following themes: 1) promoting dual language programming as the foundation for equity; 2) drawing on experiential knowledge as a strength; 3) fostering relationships through transcaring; and 4) exercising instructional bilingual leadership. These tenets support and augment the conceptual underpinnings of "learning about my students," to promote student assets, a caring learning environment, and leading through a professional learning community.

METHOD

This inquiry used qualitative research methods to facilitate the collection and analysis of data using a "naturalistic' approach (Miles et al., 2014). Artifacts collected from a five-year project identified how the role of administrators in the planning of professional learning cycles influenced teachers' critical consciousness and pedagogy to meet the needs of DLLs. The inquiry provided contextual information about the processes through PLC agendas, minutes, surveys, and K-8th grade student artifacts. The inquiry involved a Hispanic Serving Institution in higher education and three partnership school districts implementing DLE programs in southern California.

This work stemmed from a United States (US) Department of Education (DoE), 5-year National Professional Development grant titled Project ACCEPT – *Aligning the Common Core for English Learners, Parents and Teachers*: *A Professional Learning Community in Dual Language Education*. The main goal of the project was to improve the education of English learners (the term ELs continues to be used by the US DoE) through a professional learning community. The following research question guided the inquiry: how did administrators' participation in the Professional Learning Community support teacher development of asset-based approaches in Dual Language Education?

Participants

The project's PLC was twofold: 1) core planners, and 2) teacher participants working with ELs in DLE programs. The core planning group of eight members included two university faculty, one university academic adviser, a district assistant superintendent, three principals from local districts, and a lead DLE teacher (Teacher on Special Assignment - TOSA). Upon the grant award, districts selected the grant representatives. Faculty serving on the grant were the project director, evaluator, and academic adviser. The PLC core planners designed the professional learning to not only focus on strategies that promote biliteracy skills, but also address teachers' deficit discourses and assumptions about DLLs revealed during the preliminary participant surveys.

All school leadership represented Latin@ background and are bilingual (assistant superintendent, principals, and TOSA). *District 1* – principal represented one PreK-5th grade school with a 90/10 DLE strand within a mainstream program. This large-scale district had a population of 55% Hispanic/Latino, 28% White, 5% African American, and other, including Native Americans, foster youth, migrant, and military students. *District 2* had two principals – one represented a 50/50 schoolwide DLE program (PreK-6th grade) and the other administrator managed the feeder middle school with a DLE strand. The district boundaries comprised rural farmland and served schools on a U.S. marine base. District represented a population of 58% Hispanic/Latino, 33% White, 3% African American, and other. *District 3* – represented by the assistant superintendent and TOSA had a 50/50 districtwide DLE program with strands at four elementary schools and one middle school. The district, located in a rural town, served five Native American reservations. The community was largely based on agriculture with migrant working families and immigrants. The population represented 50% Hispanic/Latino, 35% White, 9% Native American, and other. All three districts supported the education of DLLs who received free or reduced meals, demonstrated academic need, and had low reclassification rates for ELs (see Table 1).

Table 1

District English Learners Demographics (CA Department of Education, 2019-2020)

Districts	ELs	Native Spanish Speakers	Reclassified Fluent English Proficient	Meals Free/ Reduced
District 1	16%	91%	18%	63%
District 2	31%	96%	9%	68%
District 3	25%	98%	14%	56%

Table 2 provides standards met by ELs at each of the districts for the English Language Proficiency Assessments for California (ELPAC) that is aligned to the CA English Language Development Standards (2012) in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. ELPAC Level 4 and established range of performance in basic skills (CAASPP - CA Assessment of Student Performance and Progress) based on the performance of English-proficient students of the same age must be acquired for reclassification of ELs.

Table 2

English Proficiency and Performance Assessments (CA Department of Education, 2018-2019)

Districts	ELs at levels 3 & 4 (ELPAC) Met or Exceeded ELA Standards CAASPP - All grades	ELs at levels 3 & 4 (ELPAC) Met or Exceeded Math Standards CAASPP - All grades
District 1	5%	7%
District 2	19%	16%
District 3	8%	5%

Over the span of the grant implementation years, 130 teacher participants across the three districts (PreK-8th grade) participated in the professional learning. About 85% of the participants were Latin@ bilingual educators who primarily taught the Spanish in their DLE program. The rest of the participants (15%) were English language partners, English Language Development teachers, or other district TOSAs. Approximately, 33% of all participants attended all the workshops offered throughout the 5-year grant. Teachers represented a convenience sample population recommended by their administrators. A call for participants was sent to schools describing the professional learning opportunity and incentives (e.g., stipends, instructional materials, conferences, certificates). Interested teachers completed a short application describing their DLE teaching experiences.

The PLC also included two university faculty from Multilingual and Multicultural Education: the project director and the evaluator, and an academic advisor, who also served as a university clinical supervisor for preservice bilingual teachers. All university members were bilingual and from ethnically diverse backgrounds. They helped schedule PLC meetings, organized the professional learning, participated in the workshops, coordinated/collected all asset-based measures, managed CANVAS, and analyzed data.

Processes and Procedures

The PLC supported the teacher professional learning during the project years through stipends and released planning time paid by the grant for grade level lesson development, implementation of strategies, analysis of students' work, and collaboration with colleagues across three districts. The administrators facilitated the grade level planning schedules at their schools, ordered materials, and monitored the implementation – a critical role as a PLC leader in the project. The professional learning topics were selected by teachers and administrators through project pre-surveys: Year 1 – Professional Learning Planning, Year 2 - Spanish Language and Writing Development, Year 3 – English Language and Writing Development, Years 4 and 5 – Be GLAD (Guided Language Acquisition Design) Strategies in Spanish, and Year 5 - capacity building strategies with trainer-of-trainer approaches for sustainability post grant. The goals included the building of educators' theoretical knowledge, examining critical consciousness, implementing strategies to support DLLs, data collection through action research, and sharing outcomes with peers through online discussions and face-to-face meetings. During years 4 and 5, the majority of the workshops were conducted through synchronous or asynchronous online instruction due to COVID-19 remote learning.

The core PLC group planned four Saturday workshops (5-hour daily) each year based on themes selected by teachers (in-person, hybrid or fully online). The pre-surveys asked teachers to provide information about their education, professional learning experiences, current needs to improve the education of DLLs, and suggestions for PLC topics. The administrators hosted workshops at their sites, as in-kind service to the project, and worked with their teachers to prepare the events. They invited their District Superintendents, Directors of Instruction, and other district principals to attend meetings; however, teacher participant targets were set by grant. Workshops allocated time for faculty, administrators, and teachers to lead sessions or invite consultants in the field of DLE. Also, the PLC invited teachers to present action research, their Master theses, and classroom projects related to the workshops. Workshops allocated time for collaborative grade level team dialogues across districts. Teams developed lessons, shared resources, implemented strategies at their sites, and posted outcomes through an online platform (CANVAS - course management system) for artifacts, reflections, and responses to colleagues. Workshops provided access to all resources via CANVAS such as: agendas, PowerPoints, California English

and Spanish Language Development Standards, Common Core State Standards, Common Core Español, research articles, lesson plans, templates, handouts, sample videos, and data collection cycles. In between the Saturday sessions, there were online discussions and data collection cycles through CANVAS. Teachers also had the opportunity to receive university credit upon completing the PLC.

Data Collection

Administrators developed, assisted, or provided feedback to measures, materials, artifacts created for the professional learning. They jointly collaborated with the core PLC group in the planning of workshops and invited to lead sessions by co-constructing knowledge and examining practices with teachers through dialogue and processes. Administrators had access to the online CANVAS platform, materials, resources, teachers' postings, artifacts, and comments. Not only were they able to view results of the PreK-8th grade students' work posted online, but also visited classrooms and provided feedback to guide program improvement on teacher input and student samples. Part of the administrators' roles was to meet with consultants and collaboratively design the workshop agendas and data collection tools (e.g., grade level summaries, lesson plans, data input sheets) as well as the protocols established to collect data within the timelines. After each workshop, the core PLC group reviewed the feedback surveys, debriefed sessions, and planned the next convening (see Figure 1). This figure illustrates the administrators' active engagement and purposeful roles in the professional learning data cycle.

Figure 1

PLC's Professional Learning Cycle and Administrators' Roles
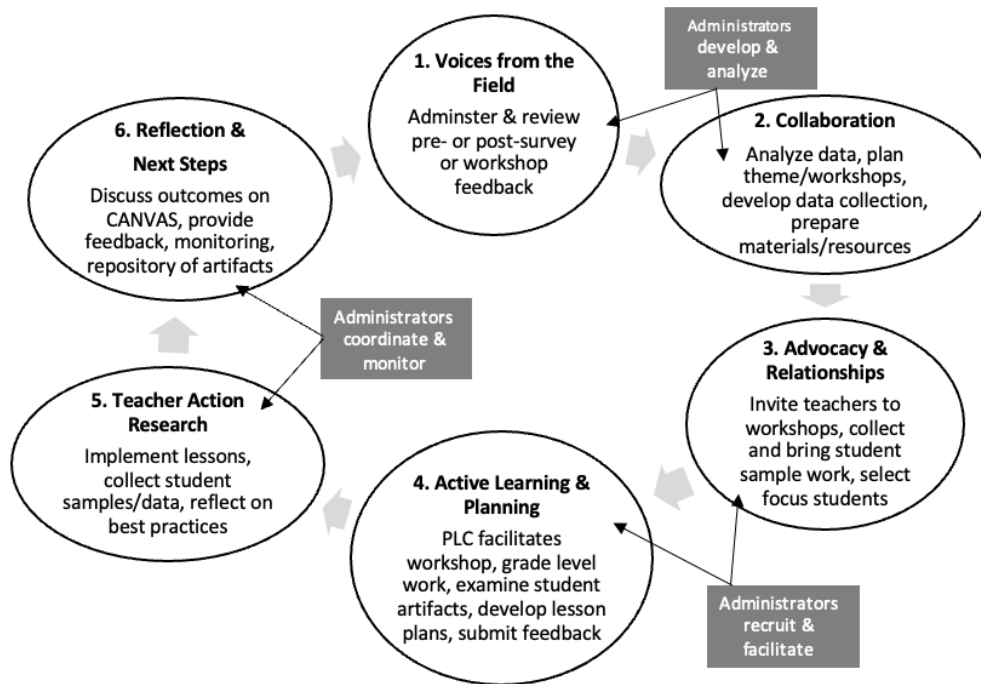
Measurements

Qualitative and asset-based assessments were developed and shared at professional learnings. They were collected either before, during, or after the workshops through CANVAS. The research was approved by the university's Internal Review Board (IRB). These measures included the following (see Table 3):

Surveys

Pre- and post-surveys were administered to teachers before and after workshops. Feedback surveys were collected after each professional development session. Data was collected anonymously and shared as aggregates with PLC and teachers. Surveys were also sent to administrators for effectiveness of project.

Agendas

The PLC collaborated in developing all agendas for the workshops with the presenters. Administrators' roles defined in agendas included leading workshops, collaborating with teachers, and follow-up activities at sites. Materials were posted on CANVAS and made available to all participants. Agendas also provided directions for activities, readings, feedback surveys, and online forums.

Artifacts

Collection of authentic materials developed by PLC and teachers during meetings or implementation of strategies was uploaded to CANVAS. These included data tables, summaries, lesson study plans, feedback forms, student work samples, photographs of strategies, videos of activities, description of processes, and reflections. Administrators and all PLC members had access to CANVAS to preview, review or provide feedback, or engage with participants.

Table 3

Asset-Based Approaches - Project ACCEPT Professional Learning

Asset-based Approach	Purpose	How Used in PL	Outcomes
Examination of Teachers' Critical Consciousness	To examine teachers' critical consciousness through personal reflections.	Administrators and TOSA engaged teachers in critical discussions of themes, readings, frameworks and instructional activities.	Administrators and teachers reflected on deficit myths. Created posters on social justice-oriented practices, multiple realities, eco-systemic perspectives.
Getting to Know My Students	To create seating charts using colored sticky notes to identify students needing additional help/attention in class.	Faculty & administrators engaged teachers in examining student spaces, access and status positioning, engagement, and resources. Collected data on how students are currently identified and stratified by problems and disabilities.	Teachers made changes to seating charts according to needs of identified students. Focused on assets, capacities, supports, and resources. Administrators & TOSA reviewed data for recommendations and monitoring.
Spanish Writing Analysis Tool and Rubric	To document evidence of standards met by students in Spanish writing identifying strengths and areas of focus in language and content.	Assistant superintendent and TOSA led workshops related to standards. Teachers identified strengths in Spanish writing for three focus students. Discussion of similarities / differences across all grade levels. Administrators posted charts.	In grade levels, teachers used results to design writing lessons using differentiation of instructional strategies and assessments for their focus students. Administrators monitored at school sites. PLC reviewed data for building and strengthening approaches and resources.
Mindset of Generous Eyes: Writing for Growth with DLLs/ELs	To learn how to use EL mentor texts as a strategy for English writing.	Consultant trained teachers to annotate a EL's writing sample as a model for a mentor text for ELD. Inclusivity, elevating student status. Administrators planned & participated in training.	Teachers implemented lessons using student created mentor texts. Uploaded lessons and artifacts to CANVAS for peer discussions. Administrators reviewed data on website and provided feedback. PLC reviewed data for cultural growth mindset and advocacy for ELs.

Asset-based Approach	Purpose	How Used in PL	Outcomes
Examining English Academic Word Use	To identified use and misuse of academic words by 1-3 ELs or Redesignated Fluent English Proficient (RFEP) student papers.	Faculty designed data collection (pre/post-test) on use/misuse of academic words for EL/RFEP papers. Teachers reviewed student papers and discussed outcomes and frequent occurrences with grade level and cross-grade level groups. <u>Administrators</u> joined grade level groups for dialogue and feedback.	Teachers developed ELD lessons to address 1-2 common errors noted on student papers. Then administered a post-test to compare academic language results. <u>Administrators</u> provided follow-up meetings at sites. PLC reviewed data for cross-sectoral collaboration of services and resources for ELs/RFEPs.
Lesson Study Feedback (LSF) Form: English or Spanish	To implement lessons developed by grade level groups. Colleague(s) observed lessons and completed form together.	<u>Administrator</u> developed instrument. Teachers completed a grade level lesson plans and next steps in implementation. <u>Administrators</u> provided release time for observations and discussion of LSF and artifacts.	LSF forms uploaded to CANVAS with lesson artifacts, self-reflections, openness, and next steps. Peers provided feedback online. <u>Administrators</u> scheduled peer observations at sites and provided time for teachers to reviewed data at school meetings to share student assets and strengths.
Be GLAD Strategies in Spanish	To engage teachers in Guided Language Acquisition Design (GLAD) in DLE.	Consultant trained teachers/PLC on research-based practices. Opportunities for demonstrations, lesson development through workshops and online modules. <u>Administrators</u> selected teachers for GLAD advanced strategies & trainer-of-trainer approaches.	Teachers implemented GLAD lessons. Uploaded lessons and artifacts to CANVAS for peer discussions. <u>Administrators</u> facilitated time at sites for advanced GLAD trainers to develop units and train other teachers. Data reviewed by PLC.

Note. Faculty collected and analyzed data for pre-/post-surveys and feedback after each workshop. Administrators looked at preliminary data to assist in triangulating findings with school level activities. Outcomes shared with teachers and PLC.

Data Analysis

During First Cycle coding, data was divided into categories through structural coding to gather major topic lists related to the research question (Saldaña, 2015). Data reduction identified prevalent categories found in the documents and artifacts. The use of descriptive coding summarized the categorization of the data. This process provided the "basic vocabulary" for a codebook with overarching themes. During Second Cycle coding methods, the PLC returned to the data corpus for pattern coding (Saldaña, 2015).

Administrators participated in the triangulation of data and with the team identified asset-based approaches as student-centered learning such as: lesson differentiation by language proficiency levels, accessing prior knowledge, checking for understanding, valuing student voices, co-construction of knowledge, student engagement, cross-cultural development, hands on materials, culturally responsive teaching, multicultural curriculum, etc. Administrators were able to verify implementation strategies at their school sites through informal walk-thrus and formal observations in conjunction with staff and/or grade level meeting outcomes (e.g., sharing of lesson studies, sample artifacts, adaptation to strategies, curriculum alignment) related to the professional learning. Data collected revealed the leadership level of involvement and co-collaboration in instructional processes through a schoolwide impact.

The following three themes emerged from the findings in defining the role and support of administrators to teachers who participated in the PLC across three districts: 1) examining teacher's critical consciousness, 2) leading with a cultural growth mindset, and 3) commitment to equity in capacity building. Themes are discussed in next section.

RESULTS

Role of Examining Teachers' Critical Consciousness

The PLC noted deficit-oriented comments about DLLs in anonymous teacher pre-surveys collected during our planning year. Some teacher comments about their DLL students stated, "No support at home, lacks reading skills," "Lack of confidence to produce grade level work," "Has a sense of defeat, because the curriculum and assessments are high level," "English learners do not have a strong foundation in their primary language," and "Limited vocabulary and oral language skills." A strong ideological stance toward deficit labeling of their students emerged across all three districts regardless of dual language program model, years of teaching experience or educational level. This intersectionality of low perceptions towards student achievement coupled with sentiments of students not achieving academically or linguistically indicated the likelihood of teachers' ideological constructs as an impediment to visualize students' strengths; therefore, perpetuating a blame of failure on families and children, not inequities in the educational system. These comments were shocking revelations to administrators about deficit-oriented thinking that had no place at their schools' and contrary to their districts' core values. The negative narratives propelled the administrators to examine these destructive dispositions towards DLLs, particularly from Latin@ educators. One administrator stated, "How did we get here? And what can be done to undo this damage?"

By engaging the PLC in a critical examination of ideological manifestation discrepant to the tenets of equity can transforms the sociocultural ramifications of schooling (Bartolomé, 2008; Valenzuela, 2016) and create a culture of care through *Liderazgo* of leaders (Wiemelt & Welton, 2015) and teachers' "learning about my students" as a conceptual underpinning of valuing students' diversity through an asset-based mindset (Hernández et al., 2021; Pang, 2018). Pre-survey results indicated teachers justified their practices by citing biased examples that limited their teaching capacities and interrupted critical opportunities for language development in DLE. Administrators were in disbelief with pre-survey comments stated by their teachers with such comments as: "Lessons taught in Spanish, which take place homogeneously with native English speakers, are slowed down, so they can understand them, limiting native Spanish speakers' exposure to high levels of academic Spanish," and "ELs insufficient Spanish language foundation impedes strong Spanish language models for peers." These deficit comments on teaching and learning require an equity-minded administrator to disrupt the negative narrative and focus attention on students' assets (Wiemelt & Welton, 2015).

Based on surveys, the PLC decided to focus on equity issues at every professional learning workshop by exploring the ideologies of critically conscious teachers beginning with knowledge of learners, their language development, and their socioemotional well-being. In addition, the administrators also decided to revisit their school's core mission, values, and program goals through intentional purpose (Blankstein & Noguera, 2015) to dismantle the misconception of students as problems, instead of emphasis on the strengths, resources and knowledge students possess to advance an asset-based approach (Lubbe & Eloff, 2004).

The trajectory for the professional learning workshops began by examining the teachers' critical consciousness. The administrators delved into readings with teachers related to social justice and equity to demystify fallacies about teaching culturally and linguistically diverse students. Two principals began our first session by co-constructing personal histories with teachers "mapping their stories" (archeology of self) and sharing their narratives within their grade level groups. The session was filled with emotions as administrators and teachers shared tears of compassion upon hearing stories of their own childhood poverty, racial/linguistic discrimination, immigration/deportation, personal struggles, and making these connections to their students' lived experiences. At a second workshop, the administrators co-examined teachers' deficit-oriented comments about their DLLs during a *Wordle* activity – depicting word clouds from their own biased texts. Teachers sorted comments and discussed their rooted beliefs and teaching implications. At another session, one of the administrators and a teacher led participants through a critical pedagogy framework to examine their identity, interrogate policies and practices, and discuss culturally responsive pedagogy. The teacher trainer stated, "Through the workshops, I have helped to facilitate the improvement in instruction for our DLE students in our district and provide direct support to English learners." One of the PLC administrators commented, "Considering the challenges still facing some dual language programs continued education on the teaching for social consciousness is needed, as well as preparing teachers for how to be advocates within their teaching."

The continued foundational work on teachers' critical consciousness led to a workshop called "Getting to Know My Students" where teachers reconstructed their seating charts with colored sticky notes and shared results with grade levels.

Each color represented groups of students identified as ELs, Redesignated Fluent English Proficient (RFEP), students with special needs or socioemotional challenges – no students names were shared only coding or symbols. University faculty and school administrators engaged teachers in examining students' spaces in their classrooms, access to curriculum, language status, assistance from teacher/peers, and social emotional supports. Teachers analyzed how students were identified, stratified, and perhaps disadvantaged at their DLE programs. In grade level teams, teachers discussed strategies on how to regroup students more appropriately with a mindset on equity. Back at their school sites, administrators continued the dialogue with teachers.

Both, administrators, and teachers, reported instructional changes made after rearranging classrooms to build on students' assets with 62% of the teachers reporting "always using flexible groupings for classroom activities" and 38% reported "frequently" using more group work. A teacher commented on changes, "I am grouping students much more conscientiously and forming smaller groups for instruction and socioemotional support." Also, 65% of the teachers reported grouping students "frequently in heterogeneously mixed groups" for language and academics. Other considerations mentioned by teachers were more frequent paired work and environmental considerations for students with (dis)abilities, as comment stated, "I have learned that in order to meet my students' needs, I have to learn about their abilities and culture." And an administrator stated, "Teacher lessons are sometimes given based on individual or group needs, which demonstrates more effective planning to support students."

Administrators noted an increase in the teachers' positive constructs, "I wish more teachers had taken advantage of this professional learning opportunity. I see a higher level of preparedness in these teachers to meet the needs of English Language Learners." However, teachers also noted they needed more time for planning instruction in addition to materials, "I need more planning time with my grade level, and more resources available to differentiate in my classroom." "Getting my team on board and having the time to plan," "I need time to plan the implementation of all these wonderful strategies for next year," and "How to teach content using the ELD standards." These comments demonstrate how the administrator's perception focused on the professional growth of teachers attending the workshops, but teachers' mindset focused on lack of planning time, needing adequate materials, postponing implementation until ready, and understanding their content better (e.g., ELD) to enact profound changes, a sign that perhaps more dialogue and site resources depended on fully supporting the professional learning implementation. In summary, although administrators noted gains in asset-based practices, more intentional examination of administrators and teachers' ideological stance in educating DLLs is needed, along with factors that may unconsciously influence discernments toward students that are related to school operations, scheduling, and resources.

Role of Leading with a Cultural Growth Mindset

One of our administrators shared a lesson study feedback cycle involving peer coaching with DLE teachers. The PLC decided to incorporate it into the PD as teacher action research. At the workshops, grade level groups analyzed their English learners' writing samples to design lessons that built on students' strengths but, also, focusing on areas of need, particularly for their three focus EL students. Teachers used word analysis checklists (Bear et al., 2015) to examine the students' writing assets and identified typical error patterns of second language learners. Grade level groups created word analysis activities for their action research. The administrators provided release time for teachers to observe and dialogue through the "lesson study feedback form," adapted from one of the principal's school instruments - asking strength-based questions, such as:

1) What strategies did you use to continue building and strengthening English writing?
2) What asset-based assessments did you incorporate to measure academic language growth?
3) How did you differentiate instruction for the various English proficiency levels?
4) What was the impact of your lesson on English learner instruction?
5) Based on your data collection… What do you consider to be your areas of strengths or needs for your next lesson?

Teachers uploaded their lessons, feedback, and reflections to the online forum. Questions on the lesson study feedback form centered on strategies teachers used to build and strengthen word knowledge in English, how they differentiated instruction for proficiency levels, and what changes they noticed in the students' academic language use. At a subsequent workshop, the administrators and faculty members facilitated the teacher action research outcomes into grade level summaries and potential overall impact on ELs' education.

Dweck (2006) states that administrators that lead with a cultural growth mindset, view ELs as linguistically gifted instead of deficient. They must advocate for the students and counterargue the negative rhetoric that depreciates the rich diversity of the students' qualities and culture (Wiemelt & Welton, 2015). The administrators' role is one of orienting their

teachers toward valuing, affirming, and knowing their students through their cultural ways, assets, and potentials - the conceptual underpinnings of the study (Pang, 2018). One teacher responded on the post-survey,

> It is a shift in mindset that is continuous, flexible, and critical for all teachers, especially many of us who have been in the teaching profession for many years. It allows us to feed the learning that is critical for us to maintain the passion and love for teaching and learning; and it is what propels us to do what is best for our kids.

Hence, the administrators' role as culturally minded leaders in this study legitimized the advocacy and support for their schools' DLE programs and simultaneously elevated the appreciation for teachers' efforts and noticeable differences in evidence collected at the end of the year. One of the administrators commented,

> Evidence of impactful lesson delivery has been collected through formal and informal observations. Most noticeable is the difference in the end-of-year portfolios that teachers submit to the administrators at the end of their evaluation year. Collected evidence shows that participants have more extensive repertoire of examples that highlight not only effective teaching, but also engaged students. Moreover, teachers that have shared best practices with colleagues during staff and grade level meetings. This has allowed for others to benefit from this wonderful professional learning.

A teacher reinforces the role of the principal in this quote,"[The principal] Has reinforced the importance of my role and task as a Dual Language instructor and encouraged me to continue learning to be as effective and culturally responsible as possible."

Role of Commitment to Equity in Capacity Building

Administrators who closely examine the multifaceted strategies and research-based frameworks that affirm the principles of social justice and equity are guided by an inner sense of responsibility to teachers, families, and community. Learning to lead for social justice is a dynamic process that begins with the examination of self and understanding one's abilities, language, and culture, including how teachers and students navigate diverse environments in school and society (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017). Evidence from the surveys and artifacts point to the role of the administrator as a co-constructor of knowledge and pedagogies in the DLE. Their role in the PLC aimed at supporting their teachers in valuable experiences prevailing from democratic foundations (allowing teachers to volunteer, provide input to topics, present at workshops), cultural growth mindedness (examination and exploration of ideologies), engaging in dialogic discourse across grade levels and districts, and opportunities to renew their practice to meet the needs of DLLs. A TOSA stated:

> Through discussions of best practices for ELs at the PLC meetings with the university professors, our two neighboring districts, and involvement of administrators we have benefited in our district by using this shared information to evaluate, adjust and improve our DLE program design.

Another comment by an administrator, "The effectiveness for teaching English learners is grounded on foundational strategies that engage and help elaborated students' abilities. We will continue to include 'Cultural Responsiveness' content and strategies." The relationships and supports provided by administrators in a PLC matter on to how teachers perceive themselves, their students and their potential to create change in their programs. It also means that administrators' roles include professional learning at their own schools to onboard new DLE teachers, engage parents, and build partnerships with university bilingual teacher preparation programs to mentor and supervise teacher candidates and host clinical practice sites in DLE settings.

Capacity building is the process of developing and strengthening the skills, processes, and resources that organizations and communities need to achieve their objectives and mission. It is also a process for aligning beliefs and refining practices with desired growth targets, including long-term, multi-level approaches, coaching, and feedback (Lammert et al., 2015). When administrators lead schools through capacity building processes, one of three outcomes can occur: developmental (first-order change), transitional (second-order change), and transformational (third-order change). The PLC denoted that two of the school administrators achieved a developmental outcome, resulting in the improvement of a process to better serve DLLs through their teachers' participation in professional learning. However, the role of a critically conscious leader is broader in spectrum than at a "developmental stage" as their leadership and actions must transition to a new state of critical consciousness (Wiemelt & Welton, 2015). The study concluded that the two other school administrators achieved a second order change to transition teachers' ideological stance to reimagine pedagogical aspects in their DLE programs. Nevertheless, to attain the role of a transformational leader, a shift in school culture and beliefs among the members results in greater significant differences across the organizational structures and processes – not only affecting their own school and program but, perhaps, policy changes at the district level that conscientiously affect all DLLs.

Overall, the study affirms that collaboration from the administrators and grade level teams demonstrated a transition to more asset-based thinking and pedagogies. Hence, the role of the DLE administrator should continue to reframe, support, collaborate, and advocate to challenge deficit-oriented ideology towards DLLs through a *Liderazgo* Framework (Wiemelt & Welton, 2015). In our study, one administrator concluded in a report, "The final gift of support we are benefiting from is observing our participating teachers share and provide professional learning to all teachers at their individual school sites on the strategies they learned through the project." Another district assistant superintendent stated, "Including strategies that have led to great results and impacted the learning of our students positively." This quote from a school administrator summarized:

I am proud to have been an active participant of this professional learning and will continue to support in whatever capacity I can. I look forward to the many years of partnership to come and to the many benefits that it will bring to our school.

To conclude, transformational leadership (Burns, 1978) is defined as what "occurs when one or more persons engage with others in such a way that leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of motivation and morality" (p. 20). Transformational leaders are reflective practitioners and advocates who see themselves at the center of educational change (Blankstein & Noguera, 2015, Wiemelt & Welton, 2015).

DISCUSSION

The professional learning activities designed by the PLC allowed teachers to reflect on their ideology and pedagogy by using a "learning about my students" approach to frame and bridge their professional learning. Equity minded administrators were highly engaged in designing and conducting workshops to help teachers focus on the strengths, resources, and cultural gifts of their DLL students by using asset-based instruction/assessments. Teachers worked collaboratively with administrators and grade level teams across three districts on lesson studies. The study's research question delved into the administrators' role in a PLC to support teacher development of asset-based approaches. Results indicated their key roles as: 1) examining teacher's critical consciousness, 2) leading with a cultural growth mindset, and 3) commitment to equity in capacity building. Due to the ideological factors that influence education, there is a need to strategically interrupt linguistic biases to confront the deficit threats impacting DLE. The role of the administrator in the PLC allowed teachers to confront and disrupt the narrative of differential expectations that curtail the education of DLLs. Further research is needed in the role of the administrator in DLE and fostering collaborations with teachers as instructional leaders, but also how equitable pedagogy and student outcomes are impacted by teachers' beliefs.

CONCLUSION

Without leaders' willingness to address dialogue, assumptions, biases, differences, and discrimination of culturally and linguistically diverse students in DLE, marginalization will continue to perpetuate throughout programs despite their commitment or policies to cultural and linguistic diversity on mission and vision statements that are espoused by hegemonic power structures and ideology. DLE administrators can provide the support and facilitate social justice transformation in schooling by challenging the accepted norm and leading to deconstruct hegemonic narratives through critical dialogue, not simply comply. The present political landscape requires leaders who are visionary, who can examine and analyze DLE goals, and implement programs without being afraid to ask the difficult questions (Alfaro & Hernández, 2016).

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