



Western Oregon
UNIVERSITY

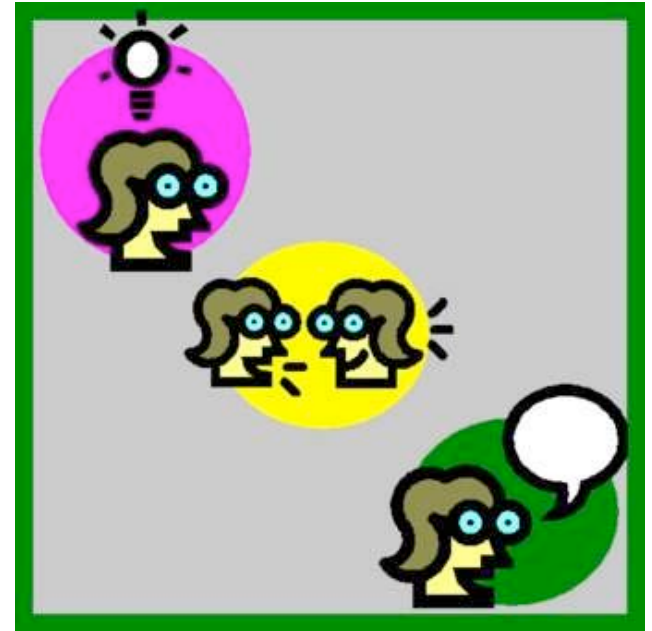
Division of Teacher Education

2016 State English Learners Alliance Conference
"Diversity, Language Learning and Student Success"
Thursday, March 10, 2016

Looking ahead: Preparing the new generation of Oregonian bilingual teachers

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- ✧ Steve Nelson, Director of Recruitment and Staffing, Salem-Keizer Public Schools



Think-pair-share activity. In pairs, what do you hope to learn in this session or do you have a burning question to ask?

Session Outline

- 1) Some initial ideas
- 2) The challenges/opportunities
- 3) The current model
- 4) Timeline for the BTSs Program
- 5) Lessons learned and challenges faced at school district level
- 6) Lessons learned and challenges faced at the university level
- 7) Some final thoughts about the BTS Program
- 8) References

1. Some initial ideas



- Every Oregonian learner deserves an equitable education (e.g., having the access to bilingual/dual language programs). (Nieto, 2010; Collier & Thomas, 2014; Thomas & Collier, 2012)
- Bilingual teachers' expectations are that they possess **the linguistic, the cultural, the pedagogical**, and the **socio-political** components to teach (Guerrero, 2009, 2011).
- WOU, Salem/Keizer, and Hillsboro school districts have a long tradition of partnering due to, for example, sharing the same agenda, or mutually reinforcing each other's ideas. (Kania & Kramer, 2011)

2. The Challenges/Opportunities



- Oregon prepares few bilingual teachers
- Change in demographics; learners bring different assets (e.g., their linguistic capital) (Ruiz, 1984)
- The challenge was to design a model that capitalized on learners' linguistic repertoires (e.g., heritage speakers) and prepare them to be bilingual teachers.

3. a) The current model

✧ Partner school districts recruited and selected students in their senior year (preference was given to bilingual/bicultural students of minority background)

✧ Funding came from the school districts (Bilingual Teacher Scholars [BTSs] will work for them during the summer), from WOU (e.g., Diversity scholarships), and from BTSs' funds.

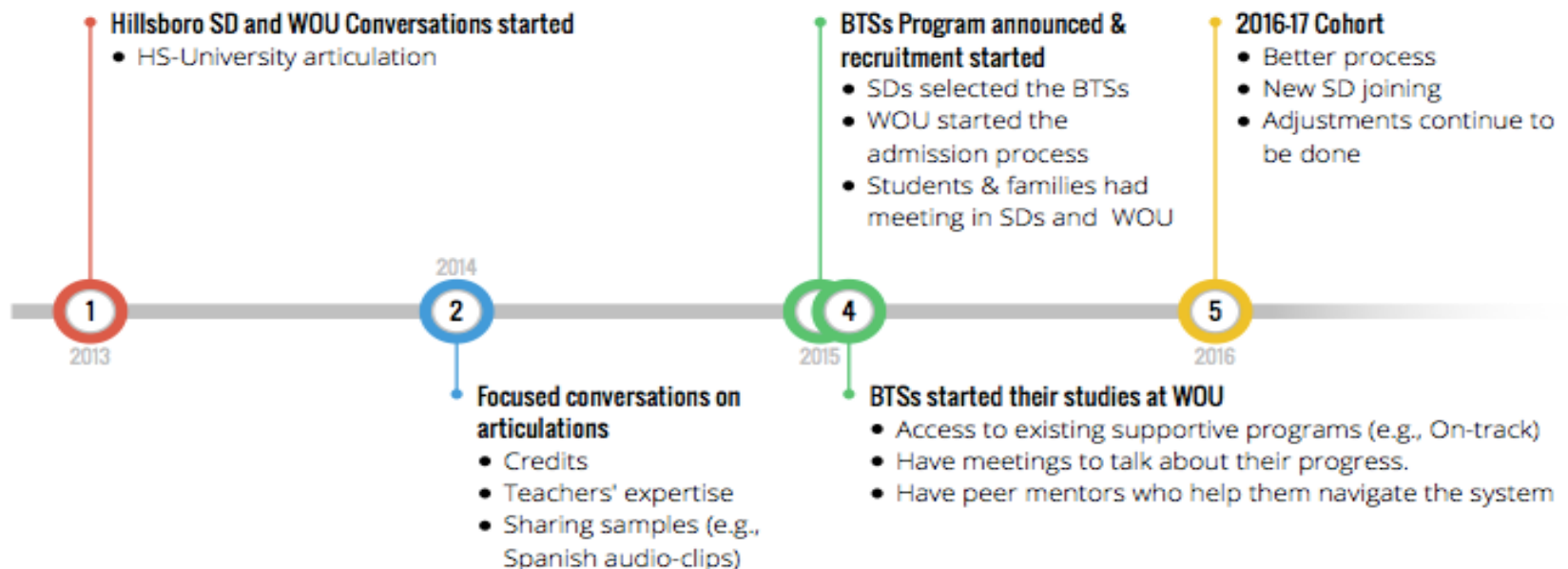
✧ 40 BTSs were admitted and started their studies in 2015.

✧ BTSs are expected to return and serve their school districts during their vacation period and as soon as they finish their teacher preparation program.

3. b) The Bilingual Teacher Scholars, 2015 cohort (photo)

4. In pairs, answer the following question: How long do you think it took to have the program to begin?

Bilingual Teacher Program (BTSs) Program



5. (a) Challenges faced at school district level



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- ✧ Financial Need/Undocumented Struggles
- ✧ Commitment is Overwhelming for Students
- ✧ Finding the Perfect Candidate
- ✧ Communication of Opportunity
- ✧ Family Commitments

3. (b) Lessons learned at school district level

- ✧ Consistent Communication and Availability
- ✧ Providing Opportunities to Learn and Explore Education
- ✧ Liaison to Students and Parents
- ✧ Start Early in the Process

3. (c) Challenges faced at school district level



Salem-Keizer Public Schools

Oregon School District 24J

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- ✧ Getting the word out to interested students in a timely manner
- ✧ Helping students and parents understand the process
- ✧ Encouraging a career in education to current HS students
- ✧ Finding students with the educational backgrounds needed (especially in math) to be successful at the university level
- ✧ District financial support for the students
- ✧ The long wait to get these students back into our system as licensed teachers

3. (d) Challenges faced at school district level

- ✧ Start early in your recruitment efforts...identify the students you are looking for
- ✧ Make personal contact with students and parents to explain the process
- ✧ Emphasize the importance of college prep classes in HS
- ✧ Work closely with the HS counselors throughout the process
- ✧ Be creative in finding pathways to the university (consider the community college first)
- ✧ Expose students to the field of education (e.g., Teacher Cadet programs)



6. (a) Lessons learned at the university level

- ✧ Placing students (e.g., in Spanish courses) as soon as admitted
- ✧ Early advice on academic trajectory (e.g., math courses)
- ✧ Share that this scholarship IS not a full ride.
- ✧ The need to work across campus should be more systematic.
- ✧ Faculty willing to design courses to be bilingually delivered
- ✧ DACA students are a unique population

6. (b) Challenges faced at the university level

- ✧ Some BTSs' level of Spanish and mathematics
- ✧ The need to count with **more support** (e.g., bilingual mentors)
- ✧ Follow each BTSs' academic trajectory
- ✧ Funds for DACA students
- ✧ We cannot have ONE scripted advising template for each BTS.
- ✧ The need to readjust activities on the spot to meet their needs.
- ✧ Making BTSs' transition to academic life smoother

Some final thoughts about the BTSs Program

- This project is the first of its kind in Oregon.
- We are supporting the BTSs as much as we can with the knowledge we have.
- BTSs are starting to own their academic & professional identity since they will be the role models for the next “cohorts.”
- Western is about to welcome its second cohort of BTSs.

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Questions, comments, additions, or clarifications.

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