

Multilingual Educators **META** Transforming Achievement

Possibility, Potential, & Promise for Language Learners

*Leveraging AI & Other High-Leverage Practices
for Maximizing Belonging, Engagement, & Achievement*

February 20-21, 2026

Stanislaus County Office of Education • 1100 H Street • Modesto, CA 95354

Welcome

Dear Friends, Colleagues, and Advocates:

Welcome to *Possibility, Potential, & Promise for Language Learners*. Today and tomorrow will be inspiring and compelling days of learning, collaborating, networking, and celebrating as we explore the critical importance of investing in the creation of language friendly environments that honor and welcome every child's language and culture in ensuring success for Emergent Multilingual Learners. Join us in learning how we can make visible the genius of our students by leveraging powerful practices that maximize belonging, engagement, and achievement.

Representing your META leadership, I bring you our highest hopes for a re-awakening of our considerable power as Central Valley educators to transform the schooling and life trajectories of our students, especially those who continue to be underserved: Emergent Multilingual Learners. To successfully accomplish this, we must be willing to actively live a collaborative vision that positions our schools and communities as transformative learning spaces that intentionally foster each student's unlimited potential and promise, that uplift their voices, and that affirm their right to fully develop their languages. This is not beyond our reach. While we can certainly take individual responsibility to make sure this happens in our own classrooms, when we are united in our efforts, we can become powerhouse models in action of what it means to hold a future-oriented vision for our students and communities that does all these things.

So, our aim at this conference, and in the future beyond our conference, is to support and nurture you in your continuing efforts to:

1. Affirm and support students in their multiple languages and identities by creating environments where students feel safe and affirmed in being who they are and who they aspire to be.
2. Respect, activate, and fully develop students' languages and cultures as personal and collective resources by validating, using, and expanding students' full multilingual repertoires as essential to their social-emotional and academic growth.
3. Engage students in successful high-level intellectual performances by connecting students' identities with academic engagement and building affirming pedagogies of high academic and cognitive challenge and success.

My sincere hope is that we will generate enough new energy and passion to support us as we return to our local schools and communities in the days that follow. We are the ones our students have been waiting for!

Francisca S. Sánchez, META President



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Possibility, Potential, & Promise

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Possibility, Potential, & Promise



Pre-Conference
Trainer Orientation
Dual Language Education Parent Academy

Friday, February 20, 2026 • Gratton

FEATURED FACILITATORS

Kevin Chávez, Executive Director
Association of Two-way Dual Language Education (ATDLE)

Francisca Sánchez, President
Multilingual Educators Transforming Achievement (META)

- 7:30 REGISTRATION
- 8:00 Welcomes & Introductions
- Conocimiento
- Academy Organization, Components, Structures, & Strategies
- Academy Days 1 & 2
- LUNCH
- Academy Days 3 & 4
- Closing
- 2:30 ADJOURNMENT



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Conference Agenda

Friday, February 20, 2026 • Chatom

3:00 REGISTRATION

3:30 WELCOME

Francisca Sánchez, President
Multilingual Educators Transforming Achievement (META)

Kevin Chávez, Executive Director
Association of Two-way Dual Language Education (ATDLE)

Annie Duong, Region I Representative
California Association for Bilingual Education (CABE)

Dr. Troy Brown
Superintendent, San Joaquin County Office of Education

INTRODUCTIONS/ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS & CONFERENCE OVERVIEW

Francisca Sánchez, President
Multilingual Educators Transforming Achievement (META)

FEATURED SPEAKERS

Dr. Jim Cummins, Professor Emeritus, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education
CHOICES WE MAKE: Expand Students' Identities and Life Possibilities Through Language-Friendly Pedagogy or Constrict Identities and Silence Their Voices through English-Only Instruction?

Dr. Isabelle C. Hau, Executive Director, Stanford Accelerator for Learning
LOVE TO LEARN: THE POWER OF CARE & CONNECTION IN EDUCATION

4:55 CLOSING & ADJOURNMENT TO RECEPTION

Francisca Sánchez



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President's Reception

Friday, February 20, 2026

6:00 - 7:30 PM

Presidential Suite - 10th Floor
Doubletree Hotel
1150 9th Street  Modesto, CA

Join us for a special evening to meet and greet our speakers and presenters and to interact with other conference attendees at the President's Reception, hosted by the META Executive Board.

(Please note that a room key card is required to access the 10th floor. For any attendees who are not already staying on the 10th floor, META will have someone with a key waiting by the Doubletree elevators from 5:45 PM to 7:00 PM to assist you in accessing the Presidential Suite.)



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Conference Agenda

Saturday, February 21, 2026

8:00 REGISTRATION & MORNING REFRESHMENTS

8:30 - 9:30

WELCOME (Board Room)

Adrienne Machado

San Joaquín County CBE Chapter 13

Dr. Karling Aguilera-Fort, President

California Association for Bilingual Education (CABE)

CONFERENCE OVERVIEW

Francisca Sánchez, President

Multilingual Educators Transforming Achievement (META)

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Rudy Escobar, Stanislaus County Office of Education

EMPOWERING LANGUAGE LEARNERS IN THE AGE OF AI

9:40 - 10:50

FEATURED SESSION

Parents As Radical Partners in Their Children's Academic Success

Dennis Parker (Chatom)



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Conference Agenda

Saturday, February 21, 2026

9:40 - 10:50

SESSION I WORKSHOPS

1. Amplifying Multilingual Voices through Project-Based Learning (and AI!)
Aatash Parikh (Knights Ferry)
2. Part 1: Game-Based Early Learning
Rashi Bahri (Shiloh)

Part 2: Data Tools & Resources
Parsec Education (Shiloh)
3. High School Student Leadership Institute (Students Only)
Marcos Aguilar (Gratton)

11:00 - 12:10

SESSION II WORKSHOPS

1. Building Bilinguality: The Dynamics of Crosslinguistic Instruction
Silvia Dorta-Duque de Reyes (Chatom)
2. Equity in Mathematics: Practical Strategies
To Support Emergent Multilingual Learners
Verónica Chaidez (Knights Ferry)
3. Outdoor Learning: Connecting Multilingual Learners to Nature
for Language, Learning, & Well-Being
Craig Strang (Shiloh)
4. High School Student Leadership Institute (Students Only)
Marcos Aguilar (Gratton)



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Conference Agenda

Saturday, February 21, 2026

12:10 - 12:35

LUNCH

Pick up your boxed lunches in the Conference Center Foyer.

12:40 - 1:15

KEYNOTE SPEAKER (Board Room)

Liliana Sánchez

RADICAL ADVOCACY: THE NEW FIVE Rs

SPECIAL PRESENTATION: META CHAMPION AWARDS (Board Room)

Honoring Dr. Jim Cummins, Babatunde Ilori, and Eugene Park

1:25 - 2:35

SESSION III WORKSHOPS

1. Teaching Academic Language Across Languages
Silvia Dorta-Duque de Reyes (Chatom)
2. From Feedback to Action: Elevating Multilingual Learner & Family Voice in Fresno Unified
Érica G. Piedra & Taylor Wilson (Knights Ferry)
3. Leveraging NotebookLM for Emergent Multilingual Learners
Rudy Escobar (Shiloh)
4. High School Student Leadership Institute (Students Only)
Marcos Aguilar (Gratton)



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Conference Agenda

Saturday, February 21, 2026

2:40 - 3:30

CLOSING KEYNOTE (Board Room)

Alma Flor Ada

THE SOUND OF A LANGUAGE:

TWO MOMENTS THAT SHAPED A LIFE IN EDUCATION

DRAWINGS/PRIZES

CLOSING REMARKS

Francisca Sánchez

CONSEJOS

3:30

ADJOURNMENT

Workshops At-A-Glance

EDUCATORS ONLY

**SATURDAY
FEBRUARY 21ST**

Stanislaus County
Office of Education

STUDENTS
YOUR SCHEDULE IS
LISTED ON PAGE 22.

8:30 - 9:30 Board Room	EMPOWERING LANGUAGE LEARNERS IN THE AGE OF AI Rudy Escobar		
9:40 - 10:50 • (SELECT ONE)			
Chatom FEATURED SESSION Parents As Radical Partners in Their Children's Academic Success Dennis Parker	Knights Ferry Amplifying Multilingual Voices through Project- Based Learning (and All) Aatash Parikh	Shiloh PART 1 Game-Based Early Learning Rashi Bahri PART 2 Data Tools & Resources Taylor Wilson	
11:00 - 12:10 • (SELECT ONE)			
Chatom Building Bilingual: The Dynamics of Crosslinguistic Instruction Silvia Dorta-Duque de Reyes	Knights Ferry Equity in Mathematics: Practical Strategies To Support Emergent Multilingual Learners Verónica Chaidez	Shiloh Outdoor Learning: Connecting Multilingual Learners to Nature for Language, Learning, & Well-Being Craig Strang	
12:40 - 1:15 Board Room	RADICAL ADVOCACY: THE NEW FIVE Rs Liliana Sánchez		
1:25 - 2:35 • (SELECT ONE)			
Chatom Teaching Academic Language Across Languages Silvia Dorta-Duque de Reyes	Knights Ferry From Feedback to Action: Elevating Multilingual Learner & Family Voice in Fresno USD Érica Piedra/Taylor Wilson	Shiloh Leveraging NotebookLM (AI) for Emergent Multilingual Learners Rudy Escobar	
2:40 - 3:30 Board Room	THE SOUND OF A LANGUAGE: TWO MOMENTS THAT SHAPED A LIFE IN EDUCATION Alma Flor Ada		



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Friday Opening Message

CHOICES WE MAKE:

EXPAND STUDENTS' IDENTITIES AND LIFE POSSIBILITIES THROUGH LANGUAGE-FRIENDLY PEDAGOGY
OR CONSTRICT IDENTITIES AND SILENCE THEIR VOICES THROUGH ENGLISH-ONLY INSTRUCTION?

Jim Cummins

jcummins320@gmail.com

In this brief message to friends and fellow travelers at the META 26 conference, I want to highlight the fact that although dark clouds hover over many schools across the United States (and in too many other countries), educators have enormous power through their instructional practice and interactions with linguistically diverse students and their families to shine a powerful light to enable students to see their way forward and to embark on life-affirming trajectories. This goal is made explicit in most dual language programs that strive to develop students' bilingual/multilingual abilities. Unfortunately, the default option in many English-medium programs has been to ignore the linguistic talents that children bring to school with the result that students' home language abilities atrophy rather than expand, and many students leave school largely monolingual in English. The language-friendly schools movement, founded in 2019, is challenging this constriction of students' identities and language abilities and highlighting powerful instructional strategies to enable students to find their way towards multilingualism and critical literacy.



JIM CUMMINS is Professor Emeritus with the Department of Curriculum, Teaching, and Learning at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto. He has held a Canada Research Chair (Tier 1) and has been a recipient of the International Reading Association's Albert J. Harris award (1979). He also received an honorary doctorate in Humane Letters from the Bank Street College of Education in New York City (1997).

His research focuses on literacy development in educational contexts characterized by linguistic and socioeconomic diversity. In numerous articles and books, he has explored the nature of language proficiency and its relationship to literacy development, with particular emphasis on the intersections of societal power relations, teacher-student identity negotiation, and literacy attainment. Cummins' contributions to our understanding of dual language education include the distinction between conversational fluency and academic language proficiency, the common underlying proficiency (CUP) that enables transfer of concepts and knowledge across languages, and instructional strategies to promote teaching for crosslinguistic transfer.

Friday Opening Keynote

LOVE TO LEARN: THE POWER OF CARE & CONNECTION IN EDUCATION

Isabelle C. Hau

ihau@stanford.edu

<https://acceleratelearning.stanford.edu/> • [Isabellehau.com](https://isabellehau.com) • <https://www.linkedin.com/in/isabelle-hau-a57175>



What if love and relationships were treated not as "soft" add-ons to education, but as foundational to learning itself? Drawing on neuroscience, developmental science, and real-world examples from classrooms and communities, this presentation explores why care and connection are essential conditions for learning—especially in the early years, but across the lifespan. As AI and automation reshape education, the distinctly human capacities to form relationships, build trust, and support belonging are becoming more—not less—important. Dr. Hau introduces the concept of relational intelligence and shows how nurturing relationship-rich environments fuel curiosity, resilience, self-regulation, and academic success, while laying the groundwork for long-term well-being. Participants will leave with a renewed understanding of why learning is inherently relational—and how educators, leaders, and systems can intentionally design for connection in a rapidly changing world.

ISABELLE C. HAU, a visionary leader dedicated to transforming the way we nurture and educate our children, is the executive director of the Stanford Accelerator for Learning, where she leverages brain science and technology to champion innovative, effective, and inclusive learning solutions. As a successful impact investor, Isabelle previously led the US education practice at Omidyar Network and Imaginable Futures, where she invested in mission-driven organizations. She is the author of *Love to Learn: The Transformative Power of Care and Connection in Early Education*. She also writes a popular weekly newsletter [Small Talks](#). At Stanford University, Isabelle teaches the class "Design to Equip Learners in Under-Resourced Communities." She serves on the board of EDC and Sonen, on the steering committee of the EdSAFE AI Alliance, the Brookings Institution Global AI Taskforce, and on the World Economic Forum's 4.0 education.

Named as one of the 100 most inspiring women by Harvard Business School, Isabelle has also received distinctions in early childhood education and human-centered artificial intelligence. A mother of two, she co-starred with Grover of Sesame Street. Her lifelong professional goal is to bring the love of learning to each and every child.



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Saturday Opening Keynote

EMPOWERING LANGUAGE LEARNERS IN THE AGE OF AI

Rudy Escobar
rescobar@stancoe.org

We stand at a historic crossroads where the ancient beauty of human language meets the frontier of artificial intelligence. Journey through a narrative of transformation, from the quiet isolation of the "silent classroom" to the vibrant, inclusive potential of the modern digital age. This is more than a discussion on technology; it is a call to re-envision the language learner experience by moving away from traditional deficit models and toward a future where every student's heritage is their greatest professional asset. As AI reshapes the world, the stakes for our multilingual students have never been higher. Will these tools become new gatekeepers, or can they be the very bridges that finally democratize learning?



Join us as the speaker discusses how Generative AI can serve as a scalable scaffold that honors a student's home language and cultural wealth rather than overlooking it. Through heartfelt storytelling and a roadmap of research-backed strategies, we will discover how to use the technology tomorrow to fulfill the promise of equity for the students of today. Participants will leave inspired to turn the classroom into a space where every voice is heard and every language is celebrated as a superpower.

RUDY ESCOBAR is a STEM, Computer Science, and Artificial Intelligence education leader with over a decade of experience advancing inclusive and equitable PreK-12 learning. His work centers on positioning computer science as foundational to AI, ensuring educators and students move beyond tool use toward deep understanding of how AI systems work, their limitations, and their ethical implications. Rudy has led statewide and national initiatives that strengthen educator capacity, expand access for underrepresented learners, and support systems-level implementation of high quality computer science, STEM, and AI instruction. Prior to education, Rudy worked on applying engineering and computer science to real world problems. These experiences inform his applied, interdisciplinary approach to STEM, Computer Science, and AI education today. He currently serves in leadership roles across multiple organizations, including CSforCA, CSTA, CISC, ISTE, CALIE, CASE, NGSS Collaborative, and the CAL MSCS Steering Committee. Through policy advocacy, professional learning, and community engagement, Rudy is dedicated to preparing students and educators to thrive in a world increasingly shaped by computing, science, and STEM.

Saturday Lunch Keynote

RADICAL ADVOCACY: THE NEW FIVE Rs

Liliana Sánchez

honeywoodsanchez05@gmail.com



In this address the speaker, a student, shares her story as a multilingual, multiracial young woman to introduce the notion of Radical Advocacy through embracing five new Rs: Re-Member, Recover, Repair, Re-Create, and Respond. She challenges educators to reflect on their roles and identities and to acknowledge, accept, and activate their power to transform the often subtractive education that many students experience and to create counter-hegemonic learning spaces of promise, possibility, and potential that center, affirm, and uplift students, their languages, and their identities. Hers is a call to action that urges educators to commit to becoming the passionate radicals our students require and together, to embark on a road that leads to liberation.

LILIANA SÁNCHEZ is a student at UC Santa Barbara, META Secretary, and a Program Assistant for Scaling Student Success. She attended a K-8 dual language program in Patterson, CA. As a high school student, she continued her language studies by participating in AP Spanish classes and was able to earn the California Seal of Biliteracy.

As a middle and high school student, she also participated in summer Arabic programs and studied at Jordan's King's Academy during her sophomore year in high school. A dedicated advocate for multilingualism and the arts, she has testified before the Senate in support of these two critical areas. As a college student, she plans to continue her language/culture studies and to pursue her interests in music and social justice.

Professionally, she has co-facilitated strategic planning convenings for several school districts and organizations. She has been a presenter and keynote speaker at multiple educational conferences, and she has co-authored a chapter in an upcoming book on language policy and practice, and honoring Jim Cummins to be published by Multilingual Matters.

Saturday Closing Keynote

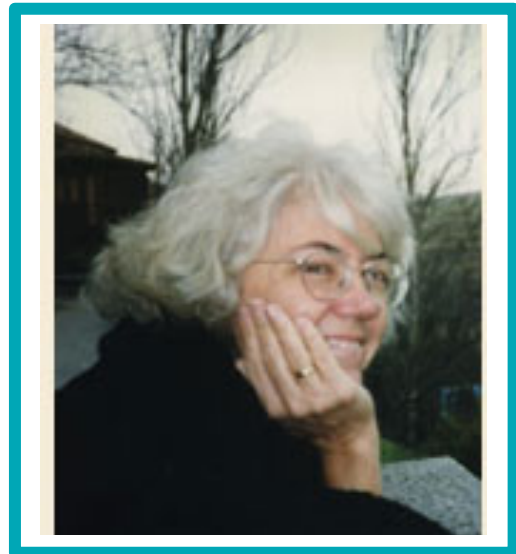
THE SOUND OF A LANGUAGE: TWO MOMENTS THAT SHAPED A LIFE IN EDUCATION

Alma Flor Ada

almaflor@almaflorada.com • <https://www.almaflorada.com>

In this brief presentation, Alma Flor Ada shares two formative moments from her youth that shaped her life as an educator and writer. Through lived experiences from her earliest teaching years, she reflects on language as a space of dignity, belonging, and memory, and on the quiet, transformative power of teachers to shape more just and humane communities.

ALMA FLOR ADA is an internationally recognized author, educator, and advocate for bilingual and multicultural education. She has published numerous books for children and adults, many of them widely used in classrooms and teacher education programs.



Professor Emerita at the University of San Francisco, she is the founder of the Journal of the National Association for Bilingual Education (NABE). Among her many recognitions are the Christopher Award, the Pura Belpré Award, the Virginia Hamilton Award, and the OHTLI Recognition from the Government of Mexico for her contributions to Mexican and Mexican-descendant communities in the United States. Her work has been guided by a lifelong commitment to social justice, literacy, cultural dignity, linguistic equity, and education as an act of hope.



META Champion Award

The META CHAMPION Award was created in 2005 to recognize our most dedicated collaborators and supporters. Dr. Milton Chen was the first recipient of the META CHAMPION Award, and Dr. Jim Cummins, Babatunde Ilori, and Eugene Park are the second recipients. Their nomination is a demonstration of META's gratitude for their continuing support of our organization and their leadership and advocacy for multilingualism, multilingual education, and language minority students in California and beyond. All three of our nominees have worked tirelessly to further powerful additive approaches to the education of linguistically and culturally diverse students and have contributed significantly to META's success.

The META CHAMPION AWARD is a small way we can showcase our awardees' tremendous spirit of collaboration, creativity, and commitment to our students and their families and communities. META and the Central Valley educators, students, and families we serve have all benefited from their generosity and philanthropic spirit, and we are most grateful.

2026 META Champion



DR. JIM CUMMINS

jcummins320@gmail.com

This year, META is awarding its META CHAMPION Award to Dr. Jim Cummins. Those of us who have been deep in this work know that Jim's work forms the foundation for our work here in California. We've read his books and articles, we've studied his work, we've heard him speak. We carry his relentless commitment to this work in our hearts and hold it close to us. We count him not just as a valued colleague but as a dear friend who continues to support our work through his advocacy, his research, and his commitment.

META honors him with this award in part because of that commitment: A commitment to telling the truth about the students we serve, their families, their communities, often in the face of lies, misinformation, and sheer ignorance. That commitment comes with grace, gentleness, and persistence. We owe so much to him. In fact, the lexicon of our profession is replete with ideas and concepts first introduced by Jim. He helped us understand BICS and CALP, the underlying proficiency theory, identity investment, coercive relations of power, crosslinguistic transfer, multilingual repertoires, and so much more. Even today, some forty years after we first became aware of his work, his prolific contributions continue to enlighten us and offer us hope that what we do matters in the lives of our students and communities.

In so many ways, Jim is our constant, our steadfast North Star. His work shines the light that we need to do the work we do. Because of his untiring work, his unflagging devotion to the truth that must guide our path forward, we have firm ground on which to stand. He is a force of nature of the very best kind: Unstoppable, powerful, someone to be reckoned with for sure, someone who always has our metaphorical backs. Jim's work is an eloquent challenge to those who would silence us; those who would erase us, make us invisible if they could. He is a scholar brave enough to venture from the ivory tower to the edges of the known horizons, using his considerable knowledge to better the worlds beyond the walls, turning intention into action. He gives us the gift of truths we must embrace if we are to be advocates we want to be for our students. Thank you, Jim, for making us stronger, better, more knowledgeable, and more powerful advocates for our students and their families.



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Possibility, Potential, & Promise

2026 META Champion



EUGENE PARK
Chief Innovation Officer
Parsec Education
eugene@parseceducation.com

This year, META is proud to recognize Eugene Park, Chief Innovation Officer at Parsec Education, as a META CHAMPION for the ways he has supported our work and strengthened the systems that serve multilingual learners and language minority students. Eugene brings a rare blend of innovation and humility to education – consistently focusing on what schools and communities

actually need, and how we can make it easier for educators to act on what they learn from students and families.

META honors Eugene because he believes multilingualism is an asset and that our students deserve more than being measured – they deserve to be understood. His work reflects a deep commitment to helping schools see the full story behind the data, including the experiences of multilingual learners, and to ensuring that family voice is not an afterthought, but a guiding force. Eugene’s support of META’s mission reminds us that when we modernize the way we listen, we strengthen our ability to serve, advocate, and lead with clarity.

At Parsec Education, Eugene drives the development of tools and strategies that empower schools to harness data for meaningful impact. Eugene founded Parsec after recognizing a critical gap in education: While schools collected large volumes of data, they often lacked the capacity to make it actionable – especially when it came to understanding student experience and ensuring multilingual learners and their families are supported through clear, responsive systems.

We thank Eugene for his continuing dedication to and support of META.

2026 META Champion



BABATUNDE ILORI
Chief Executive Officer
Parsec Education
babatunde@parseceducation.com

This year, META is honored to recognize Babatunde Ilori, Chief Executive Officer at Parsec Education, as a META CHAMPION – someone whose leadership reflects the heart of what we believe about multilingualism, language learners, and the communities we serve. Babatunde leads with a deep respect for student voice and a clear conviction that multilingual learners deserve more than support in theory—they deserve systems that listen to them, respond to them, and protect their right to thrive.

META is grateful for Babatunde's partnership and for the way he shows up with sincerity, courage, and a commitment to making schools better for students and families. His work reminds us that meaningful improvement doesn't start with assumptions – it starts with listening. With steady optimism and a focus on what's possible, Babatunde helps educators translate community experience into action, ensuring multilingual learners and their families are not only included, but truly valued.

Under his leadership, Parsec successfully launched a new product, *Real*, reinforcing its commitment to providing innovative solutions that help schools unlock the full potential of their data, with additional products on the horizon. He is passionate about elevating student voice and helping schools turn both quantitative and qualitative data into actionable insights that improve outcomes for students, including multilingual learners and the families and communities who support them. We thank Babatunde from our hearts for his continued commitment to the work that META does.

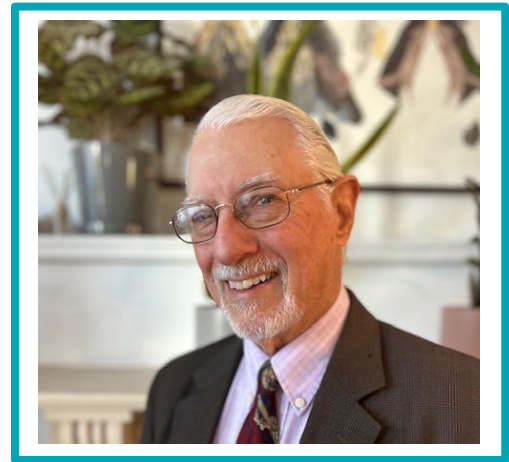
Featured Session

9:40 - 10:50 • Chatom

DENNIS PARKER

Parents As Radical Partners
in Their Children's Academic Success

It's not helpful for schools to blame student failure on lack of parental support nor is it helpful for parents to think they need special talents or educational skills to help their kids be successful in school. This session will offer relatively easy activities for parents that will make a big difference in their children's success in school as well as inexpensive and effective strategies for educators to help them do so.



DENNIS PARKER was a high school teacher, elementary bilingual resource teacher, district bilingual director, and a preschool principal in the Corona-Norco Unified School District. He then worked principally as a bilingual consultant as well as manager of the Language Arts and World Languages Office at the California Department of Education (CDE). After 20 years at CDE, he spent six years as a consultant for the School Management Program at UCLA. Since then, he has worked as a private consultant in hundreds of low-income, minority schools across the country, helping them make dramatic gains in student achievement.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Dennis Parker
Education Consultant • Best Practices in Education
dparker1018@gmail.com

Student Leadership Institute

This institute will focus on engaging high school students in building their knowledge of and leadership around the benefits of multilingualism, linguistic human rights, and advocacy. Students will receive a free one-year membership in CABE/META as well as a META t-shirt.

SCHEDULE

8:00 - 8:30	Morning Refreshments	Conference Center Foyer
8:30 - 9:30	Opening Session	Boardroom
9:40 - 12:10	Workshop Sessions I/II	Gratton
12:10 - 12:35	Lunch	Conference Center Foyer
12:40 - 1:15	Lunch Speaker	Boardroom
1:25 - 2:35	Workshop Session III	Gratton
2:40 - 3:30	Closing Session	Boardroom

FACILITATORS

MARCOS AGUILAR



HELEN PETTIFORD



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Possibility, Potential, & Promise

Student Leadership Institute, cont.

MARCOS AGUILAR (Masewalli Mexicano), Tlayekana is originally from Mexicali, Baja California, and grew up on the border. He is the Executive Director and Co-Director of Anawakalmekak in Los Angeles, California. Marcos received a Bachelor's degree in Chicana/o Studies from UCLA in 1994. He also holds a teaching credential in Social Sciences and a Master's degree in Educational Administration from CSULA. Marcos is also a co-founder of Tzicatl CDC and the Native American Resurgence Initiative. He serves as an advisor and international liaison for the Olmeca-Nahua Cultural Center of the Microregion on behalf of the Communal Lands Committee and the Communal Lands Oversight Committee, in their capacities as authorities of the Tlalcozotitlán Microregion, in the municipality of Copalillo, Guerrero, Mexico.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Marcos Aguilar Tlayekana, Executive Director, Semillas Sociedad Civil:

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sembrador@dignidad.org • IG: @1ahwatl •
FB: @1ahwatl •

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/tlayekana-marcosaguilar/>

HELEN PETTIFORD is an education leader with over 28 years of experience advancing equity, culturally responsive practice, and community-centered systems. She has held senior leadership roles in education, including Supervisor of Access and Equity at San Francisco Unified School District. Currently, Helen is the Region 1 Migrant Education Director and the Director of Transcendental Meditation for Indigenous Women. She has led state and federal grant-funded initiatives serving historically underserved communities. Helen is a co-creator of the first Native American Studies course at City College of San Francisco and currently serves on the boards of the American Indian Cultural District and Transcendental Meditation for Women.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Helen Pettiford
Director, Region 1 Migrant Education
Santa Clara County Office of Education
hpettiford@sccoe.org

Session I Workshops

9:40 - 10:50

AATASH PARIKH (Knights Ferry)

Amplifying Multilingual Voices through Project-Based Learning (and AI!)

Project-based learning offers powerful opportunities for multilingual learners to build language, content understanding, and agency through meaningful, real-world work – but only when projects are intentionally designed with language, culture, and identity in mind. In this workshop, participants will explore how PBL can elevate multilingual learners' voices through inclusive inquiry, language-rich routines, and authentic, community-connected products.



The session will also examine how AI-powered design tools, including Inkwire, can support educators in planning and refining high-quality projects – reducing cognitive load while preserving rigor, student voice, and instructional integrity. Educators will leave with concrete design strategies and a draft project concept they can adapt for their own classrooms.

AATASH PARKH is the co-founder & CEO of Inkwire, an AI platform for real world learning experiences and student portfolios. Aatash has worked as a software engineer at companies like Google & Khan Academy and as a middle school teacher in Oakland Unified School District. He holds a B.S. in Electrical Engineering & Computer Science from UC Berkeley and an M.Ed. in Educational Leadership from the High Tech High Graduate School of Education.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Aatash Parikh
Founder & Chief Executive Officer • Inkwire
aatash@inkwire.co

Session I Workshops

9:40 - 10:50 • Shiloh Room



RASHI BAHRI
Game-Based
Early Learning

Join us for an exploration of how game-based technology built with the RITEC (Responsible Innovation in Technology for Children) framework can support young Emergent Multilingual Learners through intentional scaffolding and joyful learning. Using the multilingual, game-based app Shoonya Kids as a case study, this session will examine how play-based experiences can give insights into both the struggles and successes of English Language Learners. Participants will explore how embedded game data—such as accuracy, pacing, and language choice can inform instruction, improve learning outcomes, and promote belonging, engagement, and achievement.

RASHI CHITNIS BAHRI, a Hollywood media executive, is the visionary behind Shoonya, an ed-tech company based out of Santa Barbara with a mission to foster the next generation of global citizens by exposing them to cultural diversity and world languages. She is the winner of the 2021 Spirit of Entrepreneurship Award in Science and Technology and her team is well known for their outstanding stellar execution.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Rashi Bahri • CEO/Founder, Shoonya
rashi.bahri@shoonyadigital.com • shoonyadigital.com



TAYLOR WILSON
Data Tools & Resources

In this 30-minute overview, participants will learn how Parsec Education helps schools solve challenges like turning scattered data into clear priorities, understanding what students and families are actually experiencing, and moving from feedback to action without adding more complexity for staff. We'll share how Parsec Education brings quantitative and qualitative insights into one place so leaders can spot trends faster, strengthen communication, and make more responsive decisions, especially in support of multilingual learners and the families they serve.

TAYLOR WILSON, Account Executive at Parsec Education, partners with school and district leaders to strengthen community engagement and turn authentic feedback into clear, actionable insights. She supports education teams in elevating stakeholder voice and using real-time input to guide improvement efforts and decision-making.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Taylor Wilson • Account Executive/Parsec Education
taylor@parseceducation.com



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Session II Workshops

11:00 - 12:10

SILVIA DORTA-DUQUE DE REYES (Chatom)

Building Biliteracy: The Dynamics of Crosslinguistic Instruction

Explicit crosslinguistic instruction is a research-based, asset-driven approach to biliteracy that fosters high levels of language proficiency in both English and students' home language. By intentionally bridging linguistic and cultural knowledge, this innovative pedagogy accelerates language development and supports equitable access to grade-level content. During this interactive session, we will explore practical strategies and instructional sequences that build oracy, vocabulary, and foundational literacy skills across English and Spanish. We will discuss policy statements to support and reflect the efficacy of crosslinguistic instruction and promote inclusive practices that promote academic achievement and affirm the value of biliteracy.



SILVIA DORTA-DUQUE DE REYES is a nationally recognized leader in biliteracy, academic writing, and crosslinguistic transfer instruction. She has served as an Expert Panel Member for the California Department of Education, contributing to the development of the English Language Arts/English Language Development Framework, and directed the Spanish translation and linguistic augmentation of the Common Core State Standards. Silvia also participated in the development of California's English Language Development Standards. Her curriculum design work has influenced bilingual education at both state and national levels. She is a recipient of the California Association for Bilingual Education Professional Development Award and the National Association for Bilingual Education Leadership Award.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Silvia Dorta-Duque de Reyes
National Biliteracy Consultant, Author
Benchmark Education
silviadortaduque@gmail.com

Session II Workshops

11:00 - 12:10

VERÓNICA CHAÍDEZ (Knights Ferry)

Equity in Mathematics:

Practical Strategies to Support Emergent Multilingual Learners

This session focuses on equitable practices that support Emergent Multilingual Learners in accessing and engaging deeply with meaningful mathematics. Participants will explore practical strategies that recognize learning opportunities, leverage students' cultural and linguistic strengths, and naturally support the development of both mathematical understanding and academic language.

Together, participants will experience how intentionally implementing these strategies promotes belonging, participation, and deeper mathematical thinking.



VERÓNICA CHAÍDEZ is a Part-Time Instructor at California State University, Stanislaus, and serves as the Administrator of Special Projects for English Learner Programs and Services with Modesto City Schools. She holds a B.A. in Mathematics, a Single Subject Teaching Credential in Mathematics, an M.Ed. in Professional Clinical Counseling, an Administrative Services Credential, and an Ed.D. in School Leadership. Throughout her career, Dr. Chaidez has supported initiatives that advance multilingual learner success, strengthen instructional practices, and expand access to high-quality mathematics education. She has designed and facilitated extensive professional development for educators, drawing on her background in STEM program coordination, pedagogical leadership, and equity-centered instructional coaching. Previously, Dr. Chaidez contributed to large-scale educator preparation efforts through her work with the Robert Noyce Scholarship Program and the Central California Mathematics Project, where she supported aspiring STEM teachers, developed professional learning trainings, and advanced professional learning communities focused on effective teaching practices. Her career reflects a deep commitment to ensuring that all students, including Emergent Multilingual Learners, at-promise youth, and future educators, have the opportunities, support, and learning environments they need to thrive.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Verónica Chaidez

Mathematics Instructor • CSU Stanislaus • California Mathematics Project

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Possibility, Potential, & Promise

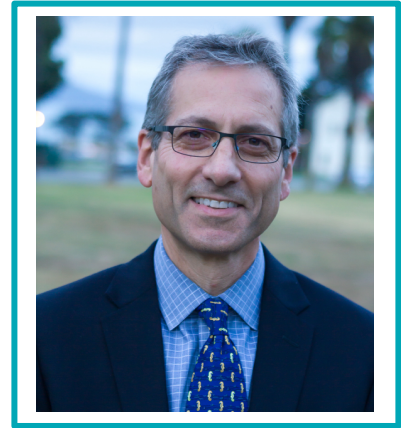
Session II Workshops

11:00 - 12:10

CRAIG STRANG (Shiloh)

Outdoor Learning: Connecting Multilingual Learners to Nature for Language, Learning, & Well-Being

Come learn about the California Campaign for Outdoor Learning. Our students are facing multiple crises, including depression, anxiety, ADHD, hypertension, toxic screen time, myopia, and declining academic achievement, all of which disproportionately impact our most vulnerable students and have accelerated since the pandemic. A powerful, research-based antidote is right outside our door.



Time in safe, healthy, inspiring outdoor spaces promotes learning, physical and mental well-being, and language development! In this workshop you will have a first-hand experience exploring and talking about nature and will contribute ideas to the Campaign's advocacy strategy to ensure the needs of emerging multilinguals are centered.

CRAIG STRANG is a Consultant and Associate Director Emeritus of Lawrence Hall of Science, UCB. His work spans science, ocean and environmental literacy, centering equity and justice. He co-leads the CA Campaign for Outdoor Learning and co-led the Natl COVID-19 Outdoor Learning Initiative; the Ocean Literacy Campaign that resulted in ocean sciences in the Next Generation Science Standards; the CA Blueprint for Environmental Literacy; the CA Environmental Literacy Initiative; BEETLES: Better Environmental Education Teaching, Learning and Expertise Sharing; and Working Toward Racial Equity. He founded MARE: Marine Activities, Resources & Education, designed to promote language development for Emergent Multilingual Learners.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Craig Strang
Consultant, Ten Strands • Associate Director Emeritus, Lawrence Hall of Science, UC Berkeley
cstrang@berkeley.edu

Session III Workshops

1:25 - 2:35

SILVIA DORTA-DUQUE DE REYES (Chatom)

Teaching Academic Language Across Languages

In this interactive workshop, Dual Language teachers will explore how to teach academic language through a crosslinguistic instructional approach. Participants will experience a modeled lesson sequence exactly as it would be presented to students, highlighting how academic language functions across languages to support meaning making and transfer. Together with the presenter, participants will construct anchor charts for key academic language terms, making language patterns, similarities, and contrasts visible. Teachers will then practice the crosslinguistic lesson using anchor charts as instructional tools, leaving with practical strategies and classroom-ready routines that strengthen academic language development in bilingual and dual language settings.



SILVIA DORTA-DUQUE DE REYES is a nationally recognized leader in biliteracy, academic writing, and crosslinguistic transfer instruction. She has served as an Expert Panel Member for the California Department of Education, contributing to the development of the English Language Arts/English Language Development Framework, and directed the Spanish translation and linguistic augmentation of the Common Core State Standards. Silvia also participated in the development of California's English Language Development Standards. Her curriculum design work has influenced bilingual education at both state and national levels. She is a recipient of the California Association for Bilingual Education Professional Development Award and the National Association for Bilingual Education Leadership Award.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Silvia Dorta-Duque de Reyes
National Biliteracy Consultant, Author
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Session III Workshops

1:25 - 2:35

ÉRICA G. PIEDRA & TAYLOR WILSON (Knights Ferry)

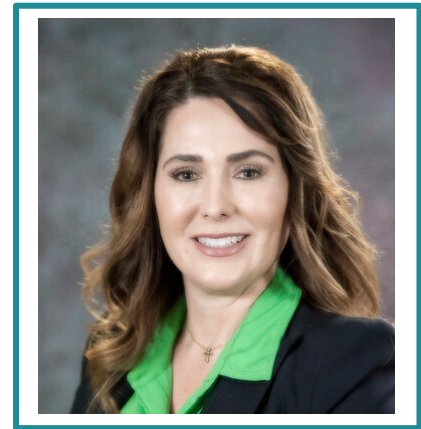
From Feedback to Action:
Elevating Multilingual Learner and Family Voice in Fresno Unified

Just asking questions doesn't build trust, especially for multilingual learners and families who often feel unheard in traditional feedback systems. Schools need structures where students, families, and staff feel genuinely valued, and where their insights directly shape instructional, cultural, and programmatic decisions.

Join us as we share how Fresno Unified built a consistent, culturally responsive approach to gathering and using qualitative feedback across multilingual communities. You'll learn how their English Learner Department connected community voice to district goals, strengthened newcomer and family engagement, and created a system that supports better outcomes for multilingual learners. Key takeaways include how:

- Fresno Unified clarified objectives and guardrails for elevating multilingual learner and family voice.
- Qualitative feedback surfaced insights that shaped decisions within the EL Department.
- The team designed a scalable rollout plan that engages students, families, and staff across diverse linguistic backgrounds.

ÉRICA G. PIEDRA, Executive Officer, English Learner Services & Multilingual Multicultural Education at Fresno Unified School District, provides strategic leadership for programs supporting English learners, including dual language programs, newcomer assistance, migrant education, and professional development. With 27 years in education, she has served as a classroom teacher, principal of a high-performing dual language immersion school, and district leader. Erica championed the expansion of dual language programs within Fresno Unified and supported districts across California in opening and growing their own dual language programs.



Session III Workshops, cont.

Her contributions have earned recognition as Educator of the Year by the Association of Mexican American Educators and finalist for Fresno Unified's Excellence in Education Administrator Award. She frequently presents at educational conferences and collaborates with organizations like English Learner Success Forum to champion the advancing of equitable practices for multilingual learners nationwide.

TAYLOR WILSON, Account Executive at Parsec Education, partners with school and district leaders to strengthen community engagement and turn authentic feedback into clear, actionable insights. She supports education teams in elevating stakeholder voice and using real-time input to guide improvement efforts and decision-making. Outside of work, Taylor is a plant enthusiast, devoted foodie exploring Fresno's best eats with her husband, and a busy mom to a 7-month-old-alongside their small but mighty chihuahua. She brings the same curiosity, care, and energy to her work as she does to everything she grows at home and in the community.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Érica G. Piedra

Executive Officer, English Learner Services & Multilingual Multicultural Education • Fresno Unified School District
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Taylor Wilson

Account Executive • Parsec Education
taylor@parseceducation.com

Session III Workshops

1:25 - 2:35

RUDY ESCOBAR (Shiloh)

Leveraging NotebookLM for Emergent Multilingual Learners

As the Emergent Multilingual Learner (EML) population continues to grow, educators face the urgent challenge of providing high level academic content while simultaneously supporting language acquisition. Often, complex grade level texts act as a gatekeeper rather than a gateway. How can we leverage technology to bridge this gap without watering down the curriculum?



In this interactive session, participants will explore NotebookLM, a source-grounded AI tool that allows teachers to create safe, personalized, and culturally relevant learning environments. Unlike general AI, NotebookLM stays strictly within the documents you provide, ensuring that scaffolding, such as tiered glossaries, bilingual summaries, and engaging Audio Overviews, remains accurate and curriculum aligned. Grounded in the three pillars of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy (CRP), this session demonstrates how to move beyond generic support to create mirrors and windows for students from Latino, Asian, Indian, and other diverse backgrounds. We will share practical lesson ideas, from transforming family oral histories into ELA sources to re-contextualizing math word problems, that honor student identity as a primary academic asset.

RUDY ESCOBAR is a STEM, Computer Science, and Artificial Intelligence education leader with over a decade of experience advancing inclusive and equitable PreK-12 learning. His work centers on positioning computer science as foundational to AI, ensuring educators and students move beyond tool use toward deep understanding of how AI systems work, their limitations, and their ethical implications. Rudy has led statewide and national initiatives that strengthen educator capacity, expand access for underrepresented learners, and support systems-level implementation of high quality computer science, STEM, and AI instruction.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Rudy Escobar

STEM and Computer Science Coordinator, Stanislaus County Office of Education and Co-Chair for CSforCA

Stanislaus County Office of Education • Rescobar@stancoe.org • LinkedIn • Instagram • BlueSky • X



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Possibility, Potential, & Promise

About

**Multilingual Educators
Transforming Achievement**

WHO WE ARE

META is a chapter of the California Association for Bilingual Education (CABE), a statewide organization. We support language learners and their educators and parents in the Stanislaus County area. Our purpose is to promote multilingual excellence in our schools and communities since this is a foundational capacity required for 21st century success, academic achievement, and family and societal cohesion. We engage in activities such as professional development to expand the capacity of educators and parents to support the success of Emergent Multilinguals and other language learners, and fundraising to provide student scholarships.

JOINING META

Full META membership requires that interested individuals first become CABE members by completing the application of the CABE website and selecting META under CHAPTER/AFFILIATE. The cost ranges from \$90 for administrators to \$20 for parents and community members. As a CABE member, membership in META is free.

For those who are not interested in becoming a CABE member but still want to be an official META supporter, META has established a FRIEND OF META membership category. The cost is \$25 annually. While this level of membership does not provide voting rights, it does allow members to enjoy discounted rates for all META-sponsored events. To become a FRIEND OF META, go to the META website and click on the link there to complete the application.

THE TOVE SKUTNABB-KANGAS STUDENT SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Every year, META offers two or more scholarships for local high school/college students interested in pursuing careers enhanced by multilingual competency. In 2023, we named our scholarships in honor of Tove Skutnabb-Kangas. Go to the META website (Tinyurl.com/METAcabe) in order to learn more and find the application form.

THE META CHAMPION AWARD

In 2025, we established the META CHAMPION AWARD to recognize our most dedicated and supportive collaborators.

OUR EXECUTIVE BOARD

Francisca Sánchez, President (franciscasanchez53@gmail.com)
Duarte Silva, Vice-President (duarte.silva@stanford.edu)
Liliana Sánchez, Secretary (ssanchezliliana05@gmail.com)
Delfina Morris, Treasurer (mmsurfergirl905@aol.com)
Catherine Halversen, Member-At-Large (chalver@berkeley.edu)
Mahbuba Hammad, Member-At-Large (Mahbuba.hammad@gmail.com)

CONTACT INFORMATION

Website: <https://metacabe.org>
Email: admin@metacabe.org

Drawings & Prizes

MUST BE PRESENT TO WIN!

We would like to thank all our sponsors and supporters who donated prizes. This year, we have a new format for prizes and drawings.

CERTIFICATES FOR FREE ATDLE 26, CWLP/CLTA SUMMER SEMINAR 2026, AND META 27 CONFERENCE REGISTRATIONS

Upon signing in, each attendee's name will be placed in a bucket for the final three drawings at the end of the conference on Saturday, February 21st. The winners of the drawings will receive a certificate for a free registration to the ATDLE 26, CWLP/CLTA Summer Seminar 2026, or META 27 conference.

PRIZES TABLE DISPLAY

All other prizes will be displayed outside of the Boardroom on Saturday. Signage will indicate who donated each prize as well as its value. Each item will feature a ticket bucket. Every attendee will receive two complimentary tickets, and additional tickets will be on sale throughout the conference as follows:

1 Ticket	\$1.00	6 Tickets	\$5.00	13 Tickets	\$10.00
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Attendees can place their tickets WITH THEIR NAMES WRITTEN ON THE BACK into the ticket buckets for any prizes they're interested in winning. During the final session of the conference, a winning ticket will be drawn from each bucket.

CONTACT

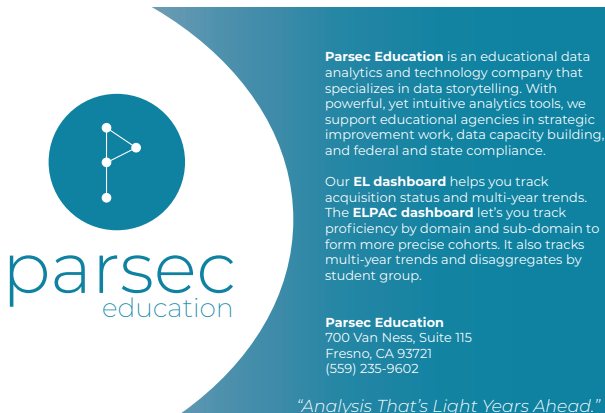
To purchase additional tickets, look for Delfina Morris, META Treasurer, who will be available during the conference.

Sponsors

This conference was planned, designed, and organized with the dedicated effort and collaboration of our sponsors. META greatly appreciates their guidance and in kind and direct financial support, and we thank them for their critical contributions.



Dr. Alma Flor Ada



W.K. Kellogg Foundation
Trustee Fund, Dr. Milton Chen



San Joaquín C.A.B.E.
Chapter 13

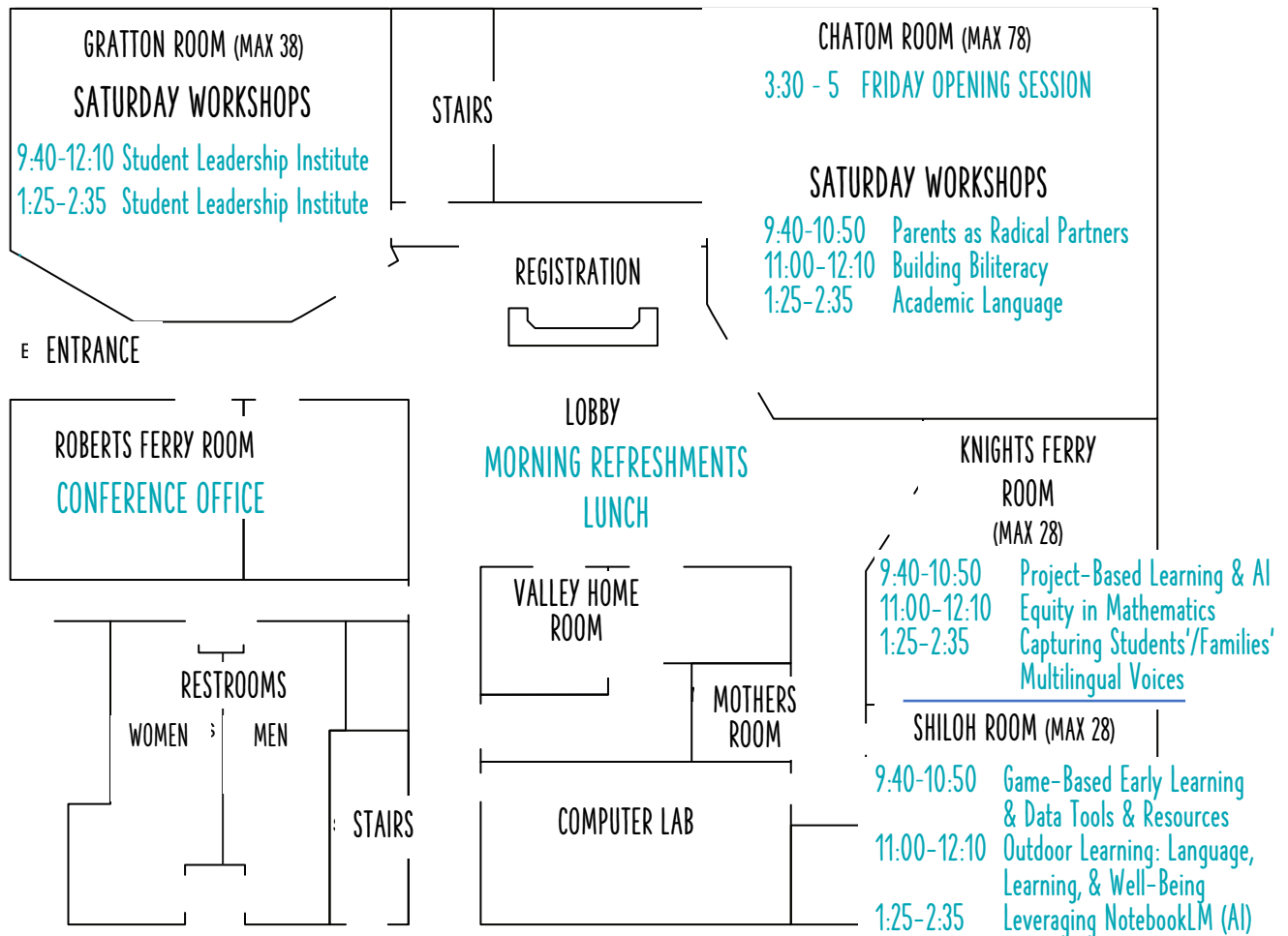


Dr. Duarte Silva



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Facility Map



SATURDAY KEYNOTE SESSIONS WILL TAKE PLACE IN THE BOARDROOM ON THE 2ND FLOOR.

PRIZES WILL BE DISPLAYED OUTSIDE THE BOARDROOM ON SATURDAY UNTIL 3:00.

BREAKFAST AND LUNCH will be available in the 1ST FLOOR CONFERENCE CENTER LOBBY area.



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Notes & Reflections



Notes & Reflections



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Notes & Reflections



**Multilingual Educators
Transforming Achievement**