

Experienced professional with breadth and depth of knowledge and experience in the preparation and professional development of practitioners serving young emergent bilinguals birth to age eight and their families. Expertise also includes support for programs in the implementation of elements that promote the learning and development of young emergent bilinguals.

Education

Ph.D. in Child Development-Erikson Institute/Loyola University-Chicago, IL
May 2008

M.Ed. in Child Development-Erikson Institute/Loyola University-Chicago, IL
January 1996

B.A. in Clinical Psychology-Universidad Nacional Pedro Henriquez Ureña-Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic
April 2081

Select Experiences

Clinical Professor- Erikson Institute

- Duties include developing and teaching courses across several of the graduate programs at the Institute. Advising students during year-long practicum. Fall 2019 to present
- Generating and/or participating in institute initiatives pertaining to the development and education of young emergent bilinguals.

Director-Bilingual ESL Certificate Program -Erikson Institute

- Responsible for setting and updating program goals in accordance to current knowledge and empirical research from the field. September 2007 to present
- Collaborating with institute's Student Services in recruitment and admission of students.
- Providing ongoing support and professional development to program faculty.
- Monitoring program students' academic performance.

Concentration Leader MSECEO with Bilingual/ESL

Spring 2018 to Present

- Responsible for setting and updating program goals in accordance to current knowledge and empirical research from the field.
- Providing ongoing support **and** professional development to program faculty.
- Monitoring program students' academic performance.

Illinois Network of Child Care Resource and Referral Agency [INCCRRA]

- Draft competencies for a Gateways Bilingual/ESL Credential aligned with Gateways ECE credential levels and bridge to the Illinois State Board of Education competencies for Bilingual/ESL September 2018 to present
- Guide and facilitate Bilingual/ESL Credentials Advisory Committee
- Contribute the identification and development of appropriate assessments for practitioners applying for the Gateways Bilingual/ESL credential
- Support the selection of Illinois institutions of higher education to pilot the competencies.. Contribute to the monitoring of these pilots.

- Identify resources to be included in the Gateways Bilingual/ESL Credential Toolbox.

Member-Chicago Board of Education

June 2019 to present

- The Chicago Board of Education is a governing body appointed by the mayor and is responsible for the oversight of Chicago Public Schools (CPS). Board members ensure CPS is progressing toward its long-term goal of providing a high-quality, world-class education for every student in every neighborhood in Chicago.

Co-Chair of the Steering Committee Chicago Consortium for School Research

Fall 2018 to Spring 2019

University of Chicago, Chicago, IL

Major Elect Lori Lightfoot Transition Committee on Education Chicago, IL

February-May 2019

- Part of team of stakeholders and academics responsible to outline Chicago’s Major Lori Lightfoot’s early childhood agenda.

Faculty Fellow- Gateways for Opportunity, IL

March to November 2020

- Member of a team of early childhood faculty from across the state of Illinois responsible for the review and update of the Gateways Infant and Toddler Credential

Early Childhood Committee of the ISBE’s Illinois Advisory Council on Bilingual Education

2005 to present

Select Recent Publications

- Melendez, L. & Syc, S. (in press). Rethinking an Early Care and Education Program: Responding to Changes in Community Demographics. In Zoyah Kinkead-Clark and Kerry-Ann Escayg (Eds.) *Reconceptualizing Quality in Early Care and Education: Understanding the Child and the Community* . Palgrave MacMillan In press
- Meléndez, L. & Chamberlain, P. (2018). Serving young dual language learners in Illinois.. *State Education Standard*, 1(1) p30-34 January 2018
- Meléndez, L. Using Children's Books as a Social Studies Curriculum Strategy. *Young Children*, 70, 48- 55 Spring 2015
- Ray, A. & Meléndez, L. (2012). More than the Sum of Its Parts: Creating Multicultural and Linguistically Responsive Early Childhood Classrooms. In J. P. Roopnarine & J. Johnson (Eds.) *Approaches to Early Childhood Education* Summer 2012
- Supporting dual language learners birth-to-three: What do we know?-Presentation at the 2016 annual conference of the National Association for the Education of Young Children October, 2016

Research Experience

- **Principal Investigator** Action Research: A Tool for Improving Early Childhood Practice Fall of 2018 to Present
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- **Co-Investigator:** Inquiry into practice guidelines for birth-to-three programs regarding work with dual language infants, toddler and families. Fall of 2013 to Spring 2019
- **Principal Investigator.** Every Child Ready for Kindergarten. A project in collaboration with the Evanston Community Foundation and District 65, Evanston, IL. Spring 2011 to Spring 2012.

Recent Presentations and Participation in Media

Dual language for infants and toddlers: Collaborative development of a responsive bilingual program. Zero-to-Three Annual Conference-Denver CO.	October 4, 2019
Story Dictation and Dramatization with Young Emergent Bilinguals-NAEYC Annual Conference- Washington, D.C.	November 2019
Interview with Andrea Guthmann for article that appeared on Chicago Tribune about bilingual early care programs.	May 2019
Live interview with from Illinois Public Media's radio show, The 21 st on bilingualism.	June 2019
Interview with Caity Henderson from Chalkbeat regarding the gap between EL students and non-EL students in the state's newly released KIDS data.	June 2019

Courses

- T-481 Integrative Seminar: Action Research in Diverse Early Education Settings I and II Fall 2011 to present
- T-408: Foundations of American Schooling and Bilingual Education Fall 2009 to present
- Family and Culture January 2008 to present
- Methods and Materials for Teaching Language Young Language Learners II: Reflective Practice Fall 2003 to present

Communication

Strong oral and written communication skills in English and Spanish.

Other Professional Experiences

Active member of several work groups making recommendations on the policy and research pertaining to the development and education of young emergent bilinguals.

- Chicago Consortium of School Research Steering Committee- September 2014 to present although currently on leave of absence.
- Advisory Board for ExceleRate Illinois Cultural and Linguistic Responsiveness Award of Excellence. September 2014 to present
- Latino Advisory Board to Chicago Public Schools- January 2015 Fall 2017