

## FABE Board Elections 2021

**Position:** President-Elect

### Candidate statements (listed alphabetically)

#### Candidate 1 of 3: Idalina Orta

Idalina Orta is a passionate advocate of bilingual education in Florida who has successfully expanded DLI-TWI programs in the last 10 years by the power of her personality, intellect and determination to bring this superior instructional model to Broward public schools. She was a DLI teacher at the inception and helped it grow from three pilot programs to 50 schools today. About a third of DLI-TWI programs in Florida are under her supervision and care!

If she is elected President of FABE, Idalina would bring over 26 years of teaching and administrative experience to this leadership position. In 2016, she was appointed to her current role as Dual Language Educational Specialist for The Bilingual/ESOL Department. Her duties include dual language program implementation, curriculum development, materials review and adoptions, teacher recruitment, professional development, supervision of Instructional Facilitators, and presenter in National Conferences.

"I believe bilingual education is critical for the academic achievement of our most vulnerable students, and an enrichment model for all. Through FABE I hope to bring this message to our policy makers, school board members, education leaders, teachers and families so that every district in Florida can offer bilingual education to its students," said Idalina.

#### Candidate 2 of 3: Susanne Peña

Susanne Peña has been an educator in the K-20 setting for over 16 years. She started her career as a teacher in Title I schools in the New York City Department of Education. She has served as District Coordinator for ESL, Bilingual Program & World Languages for the Amityville Union Free School District. In addition to monitoring the implementation of regulations, she supervised and assisted teachers (grades K-12) to align curriculum and instruction to meet the rigor of the CCLS (Common Core Learning Standards) and Bilingual Common Core Language Arts Progressions. She also served as an instructional coach, supervisor, and evaluator of bilingual and ENL (English as a New Language) teachers at Amityville School District and was the Dual Language Program Coordinator (PK through 8th grade) at PS/IS 180M in

Harlem, NY. Ms. Peña has also held the position of Adjunct Instructor at Brooklyn College for Bilingual and Multicultural Education.

She is the former Director/Project Manager for the Dual Language STEPS (Support Through Technology Enhanced Programs and Strategies) Grant at the University of Central Florida. She is currently the lead consultant at SMP Education Consulting and is pursuing her doctorate in Adult Education with a concentration in Social Justice at The Kansas State University.

### **Candidate 3 of 3: Ryan Pontier**

Dr. Ryan Pontier is assistant professor of bilingual education and TESOL at Florida International University in Miami. A former two-way dual language elementary school teacher in Texas and Florida, he has an understanding of and works tirelessly to learn more about the strengths and challenges of our bilingual programs, teachers, students, and families in FL. His research interests include teachers' language ideologies, teacher education for teachers who will be working with bi/multilingual students, and effective and appropriate instruction for bi/multilingual students. Dr. Pontier's leadership experience in other professional organizations, including Sunshine State TESOL and LULAC, has prepared him for service as President-Elect and President of FABE.

His vision for FABE centers increasing collaboration/relationships with other organizations, continuing to build membership, boosting our social media presence, growing our voice in the policy and advocacy world, providing more opportunities for practitioners to share and learn, and defending dual language programs against gentrification. Dr. Pontier also lives what he practices, as he and his wife are raising two bilingual daughters.