

My name is Nadine Nieves and I am a native of Puerto Rico. Our family came to the US in our teenage years when we didn't speak ANY English at all. But, because we had access to a good Bilingual education back then, in less than 2 years, we became fluent in the English language. And as a result of this quick transition, we became the responsible, productive and socially contributing citizens we are today.

I think we can all agree that our children are the future leaders of the world. But are we really equipping them with the tools and resources they need to succeed? Perhaps we are, but which children?

Certainly, children whose English is their second language have an undeniable unfair disadvantage in the American educational system. So, if they are to succeed in the academic environment and in becoming productive citizens, then for them, Bilingual Education is a must. There's no way around that.

The mere consideration of not having a Bilingual program in our schools to help those children adapt and integrate to a new environment makes us contributors the possibility that they may fail in the future. Indirectly, we would be setting them up for failure; and are we OK with that? To me, it's just unacceptable; as I'm sure it is to all of you.

So, what are the choices? Well, we can stand by the educational inequities and watch as our children fail; or we can step up to the plate today and take preventative measures. I am living proof that a good Bilingual education works as I'm sure there are others who share my testimony.

Our children's education is resting in your hands, so we pray that you make the right choices and that you do right by them.

Thank you and God bless us all !!!

Nadine Nieves



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