

2007-2009 OUS Agency Request Budget Policy Package

Title: *Bilingual Teacher Pathway (BTP) Program*

Policy Initiative: Excellence in Delivery and Productivity

This is a student-centered and collaborative program – among Portland State University, area community colleges, and school districts – that promotes efficiency in preparing an effective teacher workforce to address increasing needs for highly qualified bilingual and English as a Second Language (ESL) educators in the Portland metropolitan region.

Description: The BTP program in the Graduate School of Education at PSU is a career ladder teacher preparation program designed to fill the critical shortage of bilingual/ESL teachers in the Portland area and neighboring communities. All students in the program are bilingual instructional assistants, and they offer a much-needed service to the schools they serve. Unfortunately, they do not earn adequate living wages with salaries ranging between \$12,000 and \$15,000 over the nine-month school year. The BTP program prepares these instructional assistants for licensure as highly qualified classroom teachers with a Bilingual/ESL Endorsement. As teachers, many of their beginning salaries are in the range of \$30,000, at least double their previous earnings. Licensed teachers from the PSU program are highly sought after and there is a 100 percent employment rate for the graduates.

The Portland metropolitan region critically needs highly qualified bilingual/ESL teachers to teach in local schools, such as the Woodburn School District where approximately 68 percent of the K-8 student population are identified as English Language Learners (ELL), and the Reynolds School District where the ELL population has quadrupled in the last decade. Approximately 40 percent of BTP students speak English as their first language and have acquired a second language through study and international experiences, while the remaining 60 percent are immigrants or first generation Americans whose native language is other than English. Most of these students have acquired English language proficiency through formal education and while living in the United States. Some of these students were highly qualified educators in their own country, and some of them are first generation college students whose parents were immigrants themselves. All of the students are United States residents or citizens, which is a requisite for working in a school district.

Expected Outcomes: This initiative will continue the capacity of BTP to address the needs of area school districts and PK-12 students as the federal funding for the program ends. The BTP program has a positive impact on the educational services provided by participating school districts and promotes cross-sector collaboration. PSU partners with 16 school districts, including those with large

