

## **WIU Bilingual/Bicultural Education Program**

### **Facts Underlying Sustained Need for Bilingual Teachers in Urban Public Schools**

Urban areas also have a burgeoning ELL student population. Bilingual and non-native English speakers require more specialized language support to attain equal achievement with their monolingual peers. A research study involving more than 16,000 students nationwide found that schools which featured bilingual education programs were much more likely to see positive cognitive and academic growth than schools without. As the nation becomes more diverse, the number of non-native English speakers continues to grow. As of June 2016, there are approximately 70,000 English Language Learners in the district representing nearly 17% of total enrollment. Even as overall enrollment has fallen by 17,000 students since 2010, the number of ELL students grew by 17,000, *or a 33% increase in just 6 years.*

CPS has expanded its bilingual programming in response to increased demand, with 20 schools offering dual language programs as of 2015-2016. Despite the commitment to growing programmatic options, the district's capability to reach students is still far outstripped by demand and CPS faces a severe teaching shortage for these positions. In the 2015-2016 academic year, *more than 100 Bilingual teacher openings remained unfilled.* The changing nature of student demographics reflect the importance and urgency around staffing schools with Bilingual certified instructors.

**On a more personal note . . . .**

Isamar Chavez, a bilingual teacher in Beardstown, IL and a graduate of our program recently married in Hawaii. Isamar grew up in Beardstown and is just one of the many teachers with whom we work in that community. We are proud of our graduates and all that they “give back” to their communities and to WIU.

