

Hello I'm Inda Aguilera Solis and I am here today to speak to you about my experiences.

Growing up I moved around a lot, we went where the work was. Because of this, I went to so many different schools and had so many different teachers. Having a teacher look like me wasn't a common occurrence and the teachers that I had couldn't understand me, my experiences nor my language. For the longest time I had struggled to communicate with teachers, and my classmates because of our differences. My first few years in an American school I was forbidden to speak in Spanish to others, when I knew no other language-- after many ELD classes I began to speak mainly in English and my accent was almost completely gone. I remember that as a child I broke down crying to my dad saying I wasn't good at speaking English, but all the stress to only speak it was making me forget how to speak in Spanish.

When I was in high school I didn't have many teachers that looked like me, but I did have one that was my favorite teacher. I liked a lot of my teachers in high school, they were great to be around and I learned well from them, I just felt that they didn't understand what I went through or what it's like to be in a Latino family. My favorite teacher's classroom felt like a safe place where I could speak Spanish and talk about my experiences without feeling as if they wouldn't understand or not take me seriously. This teacher that looked like me is what made me realize that being a teacher and having kids like me have someone they can see and not fear that they wouldn't understand is more important than it seems, that I want to be a part of that.

Having Diverse faculty and staff at BC is incredibly important, as it could possibly be the first time a student gets the support and understanding that they need to accomplish their goals. Groups like L.U.P.E. and a Dreamers Resource Center are important for communities with large immigrant densities and should be placed all over California. Expanding these kinds of groups or at the very least the diversity within colleges could overall increase the number of incoming immigrant/Latino students. Without a doubt I'm in full support of adopting EODACs' Racial Equity Commitments at BC to better represent and provide an inclusive environment to all communities of color.

Thank you, to all the members of the academic senate for your time and for listening to my public comment today.