$2.7 million grant opens opportunities for TEA students

The University of North Texas’ College of Education will use a $2.7 million grant to enhance instruction for English language learners in the Carrollton-Farmers Branch Independent School District.

The Title III National Professional Development Project SUCCESS is a five-year grant from the U.S. Department of Education awarded to Rossana Boyd, director of the Bilingual/ESL Teacher Education Program, as principal investigator and Ricardo González-Carriedo, assistant professor, as co-principal investigator. Both work in UNT’s Department of Teacher Education and Administration.

“We want to make content comprehensible to English learners,” said González-Carriedo.

He said he will recruit 15 UNT students pursing teaching certification in bilingual instruction and English as a second language to participate in professional development on how to develop culturally responsive lessons and alternate assessments and how to use the state’s English language proficiency standards.

UNT students also will work with teachers in grades PreK-2 from Carrollton-Farmers Branch ISD to help plan and implement activities that will guide Latino parents on how to help their children with literacy and biliteracy development.

“Generally, our students do not work with parents and community members until they are in student teaching, so this is a unique opportunity for our students,” Boyd said. “Also, in many cases our students have not been exposed to someone whose native language is not English. This experience will open their minds to new cultures and help them develop an understanding of how to serve and work with a different population.”

The grant also will provide professional development for 245 dual language and content teachers in the Carrollton-Farmers Branch ISD. This includes providing bilingual books for libraries in 15 schools during the next five years.

“We want to enhance instructional services for English language learners in this ISD and anywhere else our teachers end up going,” Boyd said.