

2025 ANNUAL REPORT

Sebastian Gurski-Corniel, a proud La Escuelita alum from 2012–2015, is now a ninth grader at Dwight School. For the past three years, he has been studying Spanish in Dwight's Mother Tongue track while also taking every opportunity to speak Spanish at home with his parents and relatives. He even volunteers at a soup kitchen on 125th Street, where his Spanish skills come in especially handy. Sebastian is deeply committed to maintaining his Spanish, both to stay connected with family members who do not speak English and to broaden future career opportunities as a bilingual professional.

Outside the classroom, Sebastian's interests are wide-ranging. He plays basketball for both a club league and his school team, enjoys reading Manga, and spends time with friends. Music is another passion—he has been playing the piano since childhood and is currently preparing for an audition for Dwight's Annual Global Concert, which will take place in Shanghai this school year. He has already performed in the concert for the past two years, playing the lead piano role in New York and serving as the accompanying pianist in Dubai.

Sebastian is also an avid reader and writer. He is currently enjoying *La Culpa es de la Vaca*, a thought-provoking book on leadership and life, while also drafting his own mystery and adventure novel for teens. We are so proud of Sebastian and delighted to see the many ways he continues to carry forward the spirit of La Escuelita!



Alumnus Profile

If you have a story to share or want to get in touch with other alums, please contact alumni@laescuelitanyc.org



From The Classroom

It was another busy and joyful year in our classrooms! One project we're especially excited to share is Clase Azul's partnership with God's Love We Deliver, a non-sectarian, non-denominational organization that provides nutritious, medically tailored meals to people living with serious illnesses in New York City. The organization's name was inspired by a grateful client in the 1980s who told a volunteer she was delivering "God's Love."

Clase Azul students enthusiastically made beautiful handmade cards to accompany these meals at Thanksgiving and again in March. The project not only brightened the day for meal recipients, but also inspired meaningful classroom conversations about kindness, empathy, and the many ways children can show care for their classmates, friends, and family every day.

Many thanks to Myrna and Mike, Olivia's parents, for bringing this project to fruition for Clase Azul!



An Interview with Jacqueline Vásquez, La Escuelita's Educational Director

What inspired you to go into Early Childhood Education?

My journey into Early Childhood Education began during my childhood years as I used to pretend to be a teacher to my younger cousins and neighbors. My initial source of inspiration into this field began with my aunt and older brother who were elementary school and high school teachers in the Dominican Republic. It all started with them, seeing firsthand (I used to travel with them to and from school from kindergarten to 2nd grade) their dedication and efforts to ensure that every student received the education they needed, sometimes staying late at school to look for ways and resources to help their students. My own school experience guided me to ultimately choose early childhood. I have fond memories of my kindergarten year (today's pre-k); a place where we were free to explore, laugh, learn from another through songs and play experiences, and I wanted that for my future students.

What do you most enjoy about it?

As a teacher, having the opportunity to witness the enjoyment on a student's face when learning or discovering something new, but also helping them to be successful and to feel proud of their achievements. Now as Educational Director, I like working with La Escuelita's diverse group of educators; discovering each one's unique qualities and strengths and using those traits to offer the best we can do. Every single one of us is just one piece of the puzzle. It is gratifying to see how we come together to ensure that our students are successful, happy, and independent learners.

What is your favorite memory at La Escuelita?

It is difficult to choose one experience. Every school year brings new fond memories and experiences. From talking about unicorns during lunchtime with Zulay to explaining to the group that Pedro and I do not live in La Escuelita when they wondered where the beds with our names were stored or sharing with them the experience of Victoria's first movements in the womb, the memories have been amazing. Every day brings something new. My hope is to continue having many more.

From Kelley's Desk

According to our Family Survey, the best event of the year was—no surprise—our Annual Spanish Language Book Fair! 2024 was extra special as we celebrated the 20th anniversary of this beloved community tradition. And what a success it was! Together, we sold 456 books—a 22% increase over last year. A heartfelt thank-you goes to our amazing parent volunteers, whose energy and dedication brought the fair to life. Families also enjoyed a scrumptious bake sale, LE merchandise, and a joyful community story hour. We're also deeply grateful for our wonderful partners, Chau Luna Books and Lectorum, who make this event possible year after year.

Biliteracy is the key to bilingualism—and what a gift it is to share that journey as a community!



Strong Performance for 24-25 Annual Fund

- Total dollars: \$99.5K
- Participation: 71% of current families and 100% of board members
- These contributions support tuition reduction and special programs like yoga and music

You can contribute to the 25-26 Annual Fund [here](#) or via our website.

Lifelong bilingualism is linked to delayed onset of dementia symptoms by 4-5 years compared to monolinguals.



Families, Teachers and Board Members enjoy Fiesta 2025 at Tacombi UWS

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Our Home at St. Michael's



2+ years of construction finally concluded in December of 2024, unveiling our beautiful entrance. It gets rave reviews from families and visitors alike. The sloping walkway not only allows strollers to be pushed to the front door with ease, but it's an irresistible scooter runway as well! The architects left a large remnant of the historical "climbing" rock that many of our 225 West 99th Street alumni will fondly remember and the garden is lovingly maintained by St. Michael's gardening committee. We feel very fortunate to have had St. Michael's as our home for the past 8 years and we expect to have a long future there.



The constant mental exercise of juggling two languages contributes to cognitive reserve.

The 2025-2026 School Year is off to a great start! We remain grateful to each and every one of you who comprise our special community.