Here is a template that you can use. Please add your personal story to it, and make any other changes. Make this your letter.

Dear Chancellor Carranza,

I am a District \_\_ parent and am writing in support of our district’s Dual Language programs. I was deeply troubled to learn that our DL programs with low ELL enrollment are at risk.

We recognize the importance of DL learning for ELL students, but also recognize the importance of DL (or foreign language) instruction for non-ELLs as well. Many non-ELLs enrolled in DL programs were previous ELLs. Non-ELLs are also students who are truly bilingual speaking their heritage language at home and English at other times. For these students, DL classes support their cultural heritage and often increase their ability to communicate in the target language with parents, grandparents, cousins and extended family in the U.S. and in their countries of origin. A DL education also benefits those who are only English speakers but wish to acquire a 2nd language that is their heritage language, or simply want to learn a 2nd language because they understand the benefits of speaking another language. DL education is important to many students, and has also been shown to accelerate language acquisition for both English and non-English speakers.

For native English speakers, the benefits of DL programs are immeasurable. DL programs break down barriers, building cultural awareness and bringing diversity to the larger school populations. DL classrooms become virtual melting pots of students hailing from cultures around the world, including those that represent the target language and beyond. Students in these programs learn about differences in cultures through not only language, but also music, arts, poetry, food, dance and more.

Also, DL programs improve cognitive development and help all children think differently; students learn how to be empathetic and compromise because they see firsthand that not everyone will always speak your language or approach situations from your worldview. And, of course, any discussion about the benefits of a DL program would be incomplete without addressing today’s global society and workforce. Speaking a second language is a 21st century skill that arms our children for our world, improving their job and career opportunities.

I am happy to see Deputy Chancellor Josh Wallack and the Division of Early Childhood Education supporting pre-k DL. I would like to know what Chief Academic Officer Linda Chen, who is responsible for the K-12 DL programs, will be doing to support the K-12 DL programs, ELLs and non-ELLs who want to learn a 2nd language or retain their heritage language.

I encourage you to continue the DOE’s decades-long support of Dual Language education for ELLs and non-ELLs -- which in turn supports cultural understanding, strengthens diversity and teaches our children to be citizens of the world.

Sincerely,