

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5675

As of January 27, 2016

Title: An act relating to expanding dual language and bilingual instruction for early learners through secondary students.

Brief Description: Expanding dual language and bilingual instruction for early learners through secondary students.

Sponsors: Senators Roach, Jayapal, McAuliffe, Parlette, Billig, Fain, Kohl-Welles, Benton, Hasegawa and Conway.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Early Learning & K-12 Education: 1/18/16.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

Staff: Ailey Kato (786-7434) and Alia Kennedy (786-7405)

Background: Dual Language Program. A dual language program is an instructional model that provides content-based instruction to students in two languages. The goal is for students to become proficient and literate in both languages over a number of years of participation, while also meeting high academic standards in all subject areas. Dual language program models include two-way dual language, one-way dual language, partial immersion, or full immersion programs. Typical programs begin in kindergarten or first grade and continue through elementary school, and sometimes into middle and high school.

In 2014, the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) conducted a survey of districts in the state and found that 24 districts have dual language programs at a combined 47 elementary, 13 middle, and six high schools. Most programs offer instruction in Spanish while other programs offer instruction in Japanese, Vietnamese, and/or Mandarin Chinese. An additional four districts reported that they will start a dual language program within the next two years.

The 2015-17 operating budget appropriated \$500,000 for the biennium for OSPI to implement a K-12 Dual Language Expansion Grant Program.

Language Endorsements. The Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB) is responsible for establishing policies and requirements for the preparation and certification of education

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professionals, including approval of endorsements. PESB has approved both bilingual education and English language learner (ELL) endorsements for all grade levels.

Alternative Route Programs. The Alternative Route to Teacher Certification programs allow school districts and educational service districts to partner with higher education teacher preparation programs in order to provide performance-based alternative routes to teacher certification. The programs, which are administered by PESB, are aimed at recruiting candidates to teach in subject shortage areas. There are four different routes to alternative certification, depending on the candidate's education level and employment experience:

- Route 1 - for candidates employed as classified staff in a school district for one year who have received a transferable Associate of Arts Degree;
- Route 2 - for candidates employed as a classified staff for one year who have received a minimum of a Bachelor of Arts Degree from a regionally accredited institution;
- Route 3 - for candidates who have received a minimum of a Bachelor of Arts degree from a regionally accredited institution and are not be employed by a school district at the time of application; and
- Route 4 - for candidates who have received a minimum of a Bachelor of Arts degree from a regionally accredited institution and hold a conditional teaching certificate.

Early Achievers. The Department of Early Learning (DEL) created Early Achievers, a quality rating and improvement system for early care and education in Washington. This program establishes a common set of expectations and standards to improve the quality of early learning and childcare. Legislation in 2015 requires providers that accept children on subsidy to participate in Early Achievers. As of July 31, 2015, there were 2,756 child care centers, family home child care, and Head Start and Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP) providers participating in Early Achievers. Head Start and ECEAP are subsidized preschool programs that provide free services and support to eligible children and their families.

Summary of Bill: Expansion Grant Program. The K-12 Dual Language Expansion Grant Program is created and administered by OSPI. Subject to appropriations, the superintendent must award no less than two grants to pairs of schools districts: one with an established dual language program with a plan for expansion, and the other with the desire to implement a new dual language program.

The grant period is for two years, and funds may be used for professional development, supplemental materials, training, administrative staffing of the program, site visits, recruiting bilingual teachers and instructional aides, program evaluation, and coaching.

OSPI must dedicate at least one full-time staff member to provide technical assistance, support, and recommendations. OSPI must prioritize grants to districts with dual language programming for ELL and migrant students that support instruction in the students' native languages, and must consider:

- a district's sustainability plan for continuing the program beyond the grant period;
- the geographic location of a district to ensure diversity in the location of grant program funds;
- the opportunity gap between subgroup populations in a district; and

- the level of economic hardship in a district.

The languages chosen for each dual language program must reflect the languages spoken by a district's ELL population.

Teacher Pipeline Scholarship Program. The Dual Language Teacher Pipeline Scholarship Program is created and administered by PESB. Subject to appropriations, PESB must award scholarships to bilingual professionals wishing to teach in a bilingual program who are enrolled in alternative route programs two, three, or four. PESB must prioritize scholarships to candidates with a foreign degree or credential who are willing to work in programs that are awarded grants to expand dual language instruction.

PESB must dedicate at least one full-time staff member to support the recruitment and development of bilingual teachers through alternative routes and provide outreach and assistance to support bilingual professionals with teacher certification.

Early Learning Grant Program. The Early Learning Bilingual and Dual Language Grant Program is created and administered by DEL. Subject to appropriations, DEL must award small capacity-building grants to providers who are participants in Early Achievers and members of nonprofit organizations that provide child care and early learning program referrals throughout the state (Referral Organizations).

DEL must dedicate at least one full-time lead coach to act as a liaison to Referral Organizations, and to provide dual language training to Early Achievers coaches working with Head Start programs and ECEAP providers.

DEL must provide funds to Referral Organizations to hire at least three full-time lead coaches to provide specialized training and consultation to Early Achievers coaches working with home-based and center-based programs in bilingual and dual language instruction. The lead coaches must be content experts in supporting English language learners, language acquisition, and effective bilingual and dual language pre-kindergarten instructional models.

Report. By November 1, 2017, OSPI, PESB, and DEL must report to the Legislature on grants awarded, student outcome data, and in the case of scholarships, the number of scholarships funded and the demographic data on participants.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: English language learners (ELL) have a hard time transitioning into the existing school system. Research indicates that dual language programs are the most effective, evidence-based strategy for improving education outcomes for ELL students and closing the opportunity gap. We need to expand dual language

programs to increase student achievement for ELL students. The bill makes sound fiscal sense because it increases graduation rates and enrollment in higher education for ELL students, and it ensures that we have a bilingual workforce to meet the demands of a global economy. Dual language programs boost social and emotional learning and benefit students in and out of school. High schools and colleges have language requirements, so dual language programs are setting students up for success. This bill leverages the work that is already happening in Earlier Achievers and ECEAP, and it aligns with the Early Start Act. The bill encourages culturally responsive quality instruction and utilizes existing coaching models within the Earlier Achievers programs. The bill increases parent engagement by decreasing language barriers between parents and teachers. Many other countries incorporate foreign language in their schools and teach English, among other languages, to their students. Children in the United States are just as capable of learning another language. Another language is a handy thing to have, and it is easier for people to learn languages when they are younger.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Roach, prime sponsor; Alex Hur, OneAmerica; Emily Murphy, Children's Alliance; Baxter Hershman, State Board of Education; Madaleine Osmun, State Board of Education.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.