
SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Senator Benjamin Allen, Chair

2017 - 2018 Regular

Bill No: AB 952 **Hearing Date:** July 5, 2017
Author: Reyes
Version: June 22, 2017
Urgency: No **Fiscal:** Yes
Consultant: Ian Johnson

Subject: Teachers: Bilingual Teacher Professional Development Program: bilingual teacher shortage pathways

SUMMARY

This bill requires the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC), in consultation with the Committee on Accreditation, to develop a process of identifying additional short-term, high-quality pathways for the preparation of bilingual education teachers.

BACKGROUND

In 2013, the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) was enacted. The LCFF establishes per-pupil funding targets, with adjustments for different student grade levels, and includes supplemental funding for local educational agencies (LEAs) serving students who are low-income, English learners, or foster youth. The LCFF replaced almost all sources of state funding for LEAs, including most categorical programs, with general purpose funding including few spending restrictions. While school districts may choose to undertake these activities with their LCFF entitlements, the state has provided funding specifically for teacher support activities.

Before 2013, about \$2 million was provided each year for the Bilingual Teacher Training Program, which assisted K-12 teachers who already possessed a basic credential, to attain bilingual authorizations so they could provide primary language instructional services to English learners. The program prepared teachers for examinations leading to authorizations. Grants were awarded through an application process to 14 centers that provided specialized training to teachers who were assigned to English-learners.

ANALYSIS

This bill:

- 1) Requires the CTC, in consultation with the Committee on Accreditation, to develop a process of identifying additional short-term, high-quality pathways for the preparation of bilingual education teachers by July 1, 2020.
- 2) Requires that such pathways include all of the following:
 - a) Online professional development certificate programs relating to English language development and dual language for academic literacy certification in two languages.

- b) The establishment of a recruitment center with a focus on recruiting high school seniors awarded the State Seal of Biliteracy, bilingual paraprofessionals, and credentialed teachers prepared in countries other than the United States who speak at least one of the top 10 primary languages spoken by English learners in California.
 - c) Opportunities for California teachers to develop academic language proficiency in languages other than English.
 - d) A career ladder for early childhood education paraprofessionals and high school career pathways in bilingual teaching.
- 3) Requires the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) to provide recommendations that identify the most effective incentives for enabling existing schools of education in public institutions of higher education to establish, maintain, or expand a bilingual education program of professional preparation by July 1, 2020.
 - 4) Requires the CTC to submit an initial report to the appropriate policy committees of the Legislature regarding the development of pathways for the preparation of bilingual education teachers by July 1, 2019.
 - 5) Requires the CTC to submit a final report to the Legislature on or before July 1, 2021.

STAFF COMMENTS

- 1) ***Need for the bill.*** According to the author, California is experiencing a significant teacher shortage, and teacher workforce trends have worsened in the past year with especially severe consequences in special education, math, science, and bilingual education.

With the passage of Proposition 58, a demand for increased dual language and other bilingual programs is anticipated, however the availability of bilingual teachers is a challenge faced by school districts/schools. California issued over 1,200 bilingual authorizations per year between 2003 and 2010. Since 2010, new bilingual authorizations have declined steadily, with fewer than 700 teachers authorized in 2015-16.

The intent of the bill is to increase the number of bilingual teachers in California. The bill proposes to request that the CTC look at other options for increasing the number of bilingual teachers other than through the teacher preparation and paraprofessional routes. The two groups of teachers that would receive the targeted professional development are: (1) teachers with current bilingual authorizations who have taught solely in mainstream English classrooms and who wish to teach in a dual or bilingual classroom; and (2) teachers who are fluent in another language and who have taught solely in mainstream English classrooms and who would like to proceed with obtaining a bilingual authorization. The CTC is requested to develop a process to identify other pathways in addressing the bilingual teacher shortage.

2) ***Learning Policy Institute (LPI) report.*** The LPI's 2016 report, "Addressing California's Emerging Teacher Shortage: An Analysis of Sources and Solutions" included the following summary: "After many years of teacher layoffs in California, school districts around the state are hiring again. With the influx of new K-12 funding, districts are looking to lower student-teacher ratios and reinstate classes and programs that were reduced or eliminated during the Great Recession. However, mounting evidence indicates that teacher supply has not kept pace with the increased demand." The report included the following findings:

- a) Few teacher preparation institutions offer bilingual authorization training programs. After the passage of Proposition 227, bilingual teacher preparation programs were greatly reduced across the state. In 2009, the Commission on Teacher Credentialing approved a set of standards that would allow teachers to pursue bilingual authorization through multiple routes, with both coursework and examination options, likely contributing to a greater share of bilingual authorizations being issued to existing teaching credentials than to new teaching credentials. Currently, only 30 teacher preparation institutions offer bilingual authorization training programs, compared with over 80 that grant secondary and elementary teaching certifications.
- b) California authorizes fewer than half the number of new bilingual teachers than it did when bilingual education was at its peak in the mid-1990s. At its peak in 1994-95, California granted over 1,800 bilingual authorizations. After the passage of Proposition 227, California issued over 1,200 bilingual authorizations a year between 2003-04 and 2009-10. Since then, there has been a steady decline in new bilingual authorizations, with fewer than 700 teachers authorized in 2015-16.
- c) Despite the fact that bilingual education was seriously hampered in California for nearly two decades, districts already report shortages of bilingual education teachers. In a fall 2016 survey of more than 200 California school districts, 14 percent reported shortages of bilingual teachers. Now that Proposition 58 allows for the expansion of bilingual programs, LPI predicts that these shortages are likely to grow.

The LPI report offered several policy recommendations for consideration. These recommendations include the reinstatement of the California Center on Teaching Careers and the establishment of incentives to attract diverse, talented individuals to teach in high-need locations and fields. The report also recommends the creation of more innovative pipelines into teaching, such as high school career pathways or teacher preparation models that encourage and support young people and others to go into teaching in their own communities.

3) ***Programs funded in the 2016-17 Budget.*** To help address the state's current teacher shortage, the Governor and Legislature funded the following proposals in the 2016 budget:

- a) *Classified School Employees Credentialing Program*: \$20 million in one-time Proposition 98 General Fund for grants to local educational agencies (LEAs) to provide opportunities for classified school employees to pursue a teaching credential.
 - b) *Integrated Teacher Preparation Grant Program*: \$10 million in one-time non-Proposition 98 General Fund for grants to post-secondary institutions for the creation or expansion of four-year integrated teacher preparation programs. The funding is designed to increase the number of students who receive their bachelor's degree and teaching credential concurrently within a four-year program.
 - c) *Cal-Teach*: \$5 million in one-time Proposition 98 General Fund for the Commission on Teacher Credentialing to contract with an LEA to recruit additional teachers into the profession, including new teachers, former teachers, and teachers from out of state. The recruitment efforts will particularly focus on recruiting individuals in shortage areas of math, science, special education, and bilingual education.
- 4) ***Program funded in the 2017-18 Budget.*** Previous versions of this bill would have established the Bilingual Teacher Professional Development Program, which was appropriated \$5 million one-time Proposition 98 General Fund in the 2017 budget. Under the program, the California Department of Education will allocate competitive grants to LEAs to provide professional development to credentialed teachers or paraprofessionals who are authorized to teach English-learners and are fluent in a language other than English.

SUPPORT

California Association for Bilingual Education (co-sponsor)
 Californians Together (co-sponsor)
 Advancement Project
 California Language Teachers Association
 California Teachers Association
 Early Edge California
 Education Trust—West
 Los Angeles Unified School District
 Public Advocates
 The AVID Center

OPPOSITION

None received

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