
SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Senator Connie Leyva, Chair

2019 - 2020 Regular

Bill No: SB 594 **Hearing Date:** April 10, 2019
Author: Rubio
Version: March 28, 2019
Urgency: No **Fiscal:** Yes
Consultant: Olgalilia Ramirez

Subject: Pupil instruction: English Learner Roadmap Initiative

SUMMARY

This bill establishes the California English Learner Roadmap Initiative under the administration of the California Department of Education (CDE) in collaboration with the California Collaborative for Educational Excellence.

BACKGROUND

Existing law:

- 1) Requires the State Board of Education (SBE) to approve standards for English language development for students whose primary language is other than English. These standards are required to be comparable in rigor and specificity to the adopted standards for English language arts, mathematics, and science. (EC § 60811)
- 2) Establishes the SBE, and requires the state board to adopt rules and regulations, not inconsistent with the laws of the state, to govern the public elementary and secondary schools of the state. Existing law requires the state board to determine all questions of policy within its powers. Pursuant to these powers, the state board has adopted a policy known as the California English Learner Roadmap policy, also known as the EL Roadmap, for the stated purpose of assisting the State Department of Education in providing guidance to local educational agencies (LEAs) with respect to educating English learners attending California public schools.
- 3) Requires local education agencies, including school districts, charter schools, and county offices of education, to annually adopt local control and accountability plans (LCAPs), which must address the following state priorities:
 - a) The degree to which teachers are appropriately assigned.
 - b) Implementation of the academic content and performance standards adopted by the SBE.
 - c) Parental involvement.
 - d) Pupil achievement.

- e) Pupil engagement.
 - f) School climate.
 - g) The extent to which pupils have access to, and are enrolled in, a broad course of study.
 - h) Pupil outcomes.
- 4) Establishes the California Collaborative for Educational Excellence (CCEE) for the purpose of advising and assisting school districts, county superintendent of schools, and charter schools in achieving the goals set forth in a local control and accountability plan (LCAP). (EC § 52074)
- 5) Establishes a single system for providing support to local educational agencies and schools for federal programs. The purpose of this statewide system of support is to build the capacity of local educational agencies to do all of the following:
- a) Support the continuous improvement of pupil performance within the state priorities as described in Sections 52060 and 52066.
 - b) Address the gaps in achievement between student subgroups as described in Section 52052.
 - c) Improve outreach and collaboration with stakeholders to ensure that goals, actions, and services as described in the school district and county office of education LCAPs reflect the needs of students and the community, especially for historically underrepresented or low-achieving populations. (EC 52059.5)

ANALYSIS

This bill:

- 1) Establishes the California English Learner Roadmap Initiative under the administration of the department, and in collaboration with the CCEE.
- 2) Specifies that the purpose of the program is to serve, but are not necessarily limited to, all of the following:
 - a) Building capacity in school districts, county office of education, and charter schools for implementation of the EL Roadmap.
 - b) Including the EL Roadmap at every level of the statewide system of support.
 - c) Establishing connections to the LCAP and Title III Plan (federal) that:
 - i) Lead to meaningful goals and outcomes requiring full access to

- curriculum,
- ii) Assure meaningful progress toward attaining academic English proficiency.
 - iii) Close gaps in academic achievement for students who are English learners.
- d) Implementing instructional programs that effectively develop academic content knowledge, discipline, specific practices, academic language, and bilingual and biliterate proficiency.
 - e) Identifying and emphasizing high-quality models for professional development regarding the EL Roadmap.
 - f) Establishing alignment and articulation of the EL Roadmap across and within the state and school district systems.
- 3) Requires the department, in collaboration with the California Collaborative for Educational Excellence (CCEE), to identify and select a professional organization or organizations with expertise relating to English learners and the EL Roadmap, and work in coordination with the selected organization(s).
- 4) Requires the department, in collaboration with the CCEE, to establish a process, administered by the department, to select, subject to the approval of the executive director of the state board, a county office of education to serve as the lead agency to conduct the activities that include the awarding of grants, commencing with the 2020–21 school year, to applicants who meet the eligibility criteria described in subdivision (c). This bill makes the awarding of grants contingent on the level of funding received and the number and quality of the applications.
- 5) Specifies, that the criteria to be applied by the department, in collaboration with the CCEE, in determining which of the applicants receive grants under the program include all of the following:
- a) Demonstrated expertise in the principles and elements of the EL Roadmap.
 - b) Demonstrated expertise in instruction, services, and programs, including but not necessarily limited to, bilingual programs, specific to students who are English learners.
 - c) Demonstrated expertise in assessments in Spanish and other language in addition to English.
 - d) Demonstrated expertise in the statewide system of support.
 - e) Ability to coordinate and calibrate assistance and support to county offices of education, school districts, and consortia of charter schools.
 - f) Capability of convening its lead personnel in English learner instruction at

least four times per year to share best practices, support materials, and other important information.

- g) Ability to provide to the department and the CCEE annual written review of its efforts under the program.
- 6) Submit a written report about the program to the Legislature on or before January 1, 2024.
 - 7) Makes an appropriation of \$12 million from the state General Fund to the department for allocation over three years for purpose of the bill, as specified.
 - 8) Defines both of the following:
 - a) “EL Roadmap” to mean the California English Learner Roadmap policy adopted by the state board in 2017.
 - b) “Program” to mean the California English Learner Roadmap Initiative established by the bill.
 - 9) Makes related findings and declarations.

STAFF COMMENTS

- 1) ***Need for the bill.*** According to the author, “ With the passage of Proposition 58 in 2016 many of the legal barriers to meeting the needs of English learners support, and increase the capacity of local educational agencies schools, and educators in their efforts to provide a world class education for all of our students including our English learners.

On July 12, 2017, the State Board of Education unanimously adopted a historic new policy for English Learners, superseding the 1988 English Learner policy stemming from Proposition 277 in 1998. This policy articulates a common vision and mission for educating English learner students and supports local educational agencies as they implement the policy.

While there has been some professional development on the EL Roadmap such as the two CDE rollouts in 2018, there are still vast areas of the state where educators are not aware of the EL Roadmap and its utility in developing a comprehensive approach regarding services, programs and strategies specific to the instruction of EL students.” This bill seeks to promote foundational principles for serving English learners from preschool to graduation at California public schools.

- 2) ***English learners in California.*** According to the California Department of Education (CDE), in the 2016-17 school year there were approximately 1.3 million English learners in California public schools, representing 20.4 percent of the total enrollment. The majority of English learners (71.5 percent) are enrolled in the elementary grades (K-6) with the remaining 28.5 percent enrolled in grades 7-12. The statewide average rate of annual reclassification of English learners to

English proficient is approximately 11 percent. Of the state's English learner population, 82 percent are Spanish speakers. It is the state's goal to ensure that English learners acquire full proficiency in English as rapidly and effectively as possible and attain parity with native English speakers and achieve the same rigorous grade-level academic standards that are expected of all students.

- 3) ***English learner achievement gap.*** Research shows that English learner students score substantially lower on state assessments than non-English learner students. While there has been incremental growth in achievement among students in both the general population and English learners, the rate of growth in the general population has significantly outpaced that of English learners widening the achievement gap over time. According to the California Department of Education (CDE), the overall 2013-2014 four-year cohort graduation was 91 percent, while the rate for English learners was 65 percent, the lowest of any subgroup besides students in special education. The dropout rate for English learners, at 21 percent, was the highest of any subgroup.
- 4) ***Identification of English learners who may qualify for special education.*** Further, according to the CDE, while 10 percent of California students qualify for special education services, 9.1 percent of English proficient students and 14.4 percent of English learners qualify for these services. This shows that English learners are identified for special education services at a higher rate than for non-English learners. Compared to other states, California has an above average percentage of English learners in special education and 35 percent of all English learners in special education in the country. The identification, assessment and instruction of English learners who may qualify for special education services is a complex process and inappropriate placements may cause a spike in rates. For this reason ***staff recommends*** that the bill be amended as follows:

426(c)(2) Demonstrated expertise in instruction, services, and programs, including, but not necessarily limited to, bilingual programs, specific to students who are English learners *including English learners who qualify for special education services.*
- 5) ***Policy adopted by the State Board of Education (SBE).*** In 2017, the SBE adopted the California English Learner Roadmap to assist the CDE in providing guidance to local educational agencies in welcoming, understanding the diverse population of students who are English learners attending California public schools from preschool to graduation. As stated, the policy aims to encourage innovative district and school implementation of evidence-based practices for curricula materials adoption and development, instruction, professional development and leadership that are responsive to the differentiated strengths and needs of English learners and strengthening appropriate assessment tools and practices. Further the policy establishes a state vision of success for English learners and outlines four foundational principles to support its vision of which include the following; 1) assets-oriented and needs-responsive schools; 2) intellectual quality of instructions and meaningful access; 3) system conditions that support effectiveness and; 4) alignment and articulation with and across systems. This bill seeks to establish a program to promote the policy adopted by

the state board of education in a manner that coordinates with the state's efforts to improve the educational system.

- 6) **Role clarity.** This measure requires California Department of Education (CDE) in collaboration with the California Collaborative for Educational Excellence (CCEE) establish a process to select a county office of education to serve as the lead agency to conduct activities including the awarding of grants based on the specified criteria. It appears that CDE is charged with selecting grantees however, it's unclear whether the lead agency plays a role in this process. For this reason **staff recommends** that the bill be amended as follows:
- 426 (b)(1) The department, in collaboration with the CCEE, shall establish a process, administered by the department, to select, subject to the approval of the executive director of the state board, a county office of education to serve as the lead agency to conduct the activities required pursuant to this section. ~~These activities include the awarding of grants, commencing with the 2020-21 school year, to applicants who meet the eligibility criteria described in subdivision (c). The number of grants to be awarded, and the amounts and durations of the grants, shall be contingent on the level of funding received and the number and quality of the applications.~~
 - (2) The lead county office of education shall administer subgrants to a local educational agency to help implement efforts regionally on the EL Roadmap and to highlight best practices, exemplary programs or models that can be scaled and learned from across the state.
 - (3) Commencing with the 2020-21 school year, subgrants shall be awarded to applicants who meet the eligibility criteria determine by the department. The number of grants to be awarded, and the amounts and durations of the grants, shall be contingent on the level of funding received and the number and quality of the applications.
 - 426(c) The criteria to be applied by the department, in collaboration with the CCEE, in determining which of the applicants shall receive grants a grant for purposes of conducting activities required of the lead agency under the program shall include all of the following:
 - 425 (c)(5) Identifying and emphasizing high-quality models for professional development regarding the EL Roadmap, including, but not limited to, principal coaching and other models to best meet the needs of school leaders.

SUPPORT

Abriendo Puertas/Opening Doors
 California Association for Bilingual Education
 California Language Teachers' Association
 California State PTA
 Californians Together

Children Now
Imperial County Office of Education
Innercity Struggle
Los Angeles County Office of Education
Los Angeles Unified School District
Napa County Office of Education
Public Counsel
San Diego County Office of Education
San Joaquin County Office of Education
San Mateo County Office of Education
Shasta County Office of Education
Siskiyou County Office of Education
Sonoma County Office of Education
Tulare County Office of Education
Williams Unified School District
Zaragoza-Diaz & Associates

OPPOSITION

None received

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