

Assembly Bill 1127

Bilingual Teacher Professional Development Program

Assemblywoman Reyes

SUMMARY

California's dramatic teacher shortage has been significantly growing, including the shortage of bilingual teachers to serve an increasingly diverse population. With over 1.1 million English learner students, the need for bilingual teachers is growing. AB 1127 will revise and bring back the Bilingual Teacher Professional Development Program (BTPDP), which will be used as a "grow your own" approach to address the bilingual teacher shortage.

BACKGROUND

Districts have been scrambling for bilingual teachers to staff bilingual classrooms in languages such as Spanish, Mandarin, Cantonese, Korean, and Vietnamese. This shortage has increased with the expansion of Universal Transitional Kindergarten.

Ensuring all schools have the necessary bilingual teachers is a key component to addressing the teacher shortage. Empowering districts and schools to develop teacher candidates or update former bilingual teachers from their community is an effective way to fill the teacher shortage.

The previous BTPDP-funded projects provided professional learning opportunities to thousands of eligible teachers, principals, and paraprofessionals to increase the number of teachers who obtain a bilingual authorization as a result of participation in the program and to increase the number of teachers with a bilingual authorization who return to teaching in a bilingual or multilingual classroom setting.

PROBLEM

A large number of existing staff in local educational agencies have the linguistic skills to become authorized bilingual teachers. These individuals need adequate and structured local support to complete the training necessary to earn their bilingual authorization with their teaching credential.

The successful BTPDP's funding expired in June of 2021. Without additional funding to bring back and continue this program, California will lack a significant tool needed to address the bilingual teacher shortage. Without a comprehensive approach to address the bilingual teacher shortage, California will fail to meet the educational needs of over 1.1 million of its English learner students.

SOLUTION

AB 1127 will revise and continue the BTPDP for an additional five years to address the critical bilingual teacher shortage facing California's schools. This important legislation will provide a "grow your own" approach to achieve this goal by allowing eligible local educational agencies apply for state funds to provide professional learning opportunities to increase the number of authorized bilingual teachers working in their schools.

CONTACT

Samantha Elizalde
Assembly Fellow
Assembly Majority Leader Eloise Gómez Reyes
47th District
(916) 319-2047
Samantha.Elizalde@asm.ca.gov

SUPPORT

California Association for Bilingual Education (Co-Sponsor)
Californians Together (Co-Sponsor)
Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony
Thurmond (Co-Sponsor)