
SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Senator Josh Newman, Chair

2023 - 2024 Regular

Bill No:	AB 1127	Hearing Date:	June 21, 2023
Author:	Reyes		
Version:	February 15, 2023		
Urgency:	No	Fiscal:	Yes
Consultant:	Ian Johnson		

Subject: Teachers: professional development: Bilingual Teacher Professional Development Program

SUMMARY

This bill extends the performance and reporting period for the Bilingual Teacher Professional Development Program (BTPDP) from 2024 to 2029, and requires the California Department of Education (CDE), when administering the BTPDP, to meet quarterly with grant recipients to share promising practices and resources.

BACKGROUND

Existing law:

- 1) Establishes the BTPDP, to be administered by the CDE, in consultation with the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC). Requires the CDE to issue grants to applicants through a competitive process. Establishes the project performance period for the BTPDP as January 1, 2018, to June 30, 2021. (Education Code (EC) 52202)
- 2) Requires the CDE to allocate grant funding to eligible local educational agencies (LEAs), including county offices of education (COEs), school districts, charter schools, and consortia of LEAs, for purposes of providing professional development services to teachers or paraprofessionals. Requires the CDE to issue a minimum of five grants under the program.
- 3) Makes the following individuals eligible for support under the program:
 - a) Teachers possessing a teaching credential or an education specialist credential and who either:
 - i) Possess an authorization to provide instruction to English learners and have provided instruction solely in English-only classrooms for three years or more; or
 - ii) Are fluent in a language other than English, and are seeking a bilingual authorization; and
 - b) Paraprofessionals who are fluent in a language other than English, and who seek to work with English learners or in a bilingual program, and who

intend to enter a pathway to become a credentialed teacher who holds a bilingual authorization.

- 4) Requires the CDE to ensure that an applicant indicates how it plans to increase the number of teachers who obtain a bilingual authorization as a result of participation in the program and increase the number of teachers with a bilingual authorization who return to teaching in a bilingual or multilingual setting.
- 5) Requires grant recipients, by January 1, 2022, to provide a final report to the CDE on the number of participants who were issued bilingual authorizations, the number of previously authorized teachers who have participated in the program and subsequently returned to bilingual teaching assignments, and the number of teachers who are still working at least 50% of the time in a bilingual setting.
- 6) Requires that public schools ensure that students obtain English language proficiency. Requires school districts to solicit parent and community input in developing language acquisition programs. Requires instruction to ensure English acquisition as rapidly and effectively as possible. Authorizes school districts to establish dual-language immersion programs for both native and non-native English speakers. (EC 305)
- 7) Establishes authorizations for teachers to teach English learners in their primary languages. (EC 44253.4)
- 8) Requires the CTC to develop objective and verifiable standards for an authorization for bilingual-cross-cultural competence for holders of an appropriate credential, certificate, authorization, or permit who will be serving English learners. (EC 44253.7)
- 9) Requires that candidates for the bilingual authorization, by oral and written examination, or by completing an approved program that consists of coursework or a combination of coursework and examinations, demonstrate all of the following:
 - a) Competence in both the oral and written skills of a language other than English;
 - b) Competence in both the oral and written skills in the English language. States that a passing score on the reading and writing portions of the basic skills proficiency test satisfies the written skills portion of this requirement;
 - c) Knowledge and understanding of the cultural and historical heritage of the limited-English-proficient individuals to be served; and
 - d) Ability to perform the services the candidate is certified or authorized to perform in English and in a language other than English. (EC 44253.7)
- 10) Authorizes a teacher who possesses a credential or permit and is able to present a valid out-of-state credential or certificate that authorizes the instruction of

English language learners or to teach in a bilingual setting in students' primary language to qualify for the authorization by submitting an application and fee to the CTC.

- 11) Establishes the Bilingual Teacher Training Assistance Program (BTTP), administered by the CDE in consultation with the CTC and representatives of bilingual educators, for teachers who are granted waivers and who are enrolled and participating in a program leading to a bilingual specialist credential or a certificate of competence for bilingual-crosscultural competence. (EC 52180)

ANALYSIS

This bill:

- 1) Extends the project performance period for the BTPDP grant, from January 1, 2024 to June 30, 2029.
- 2) Extends the dates, from January 1, 2024 to June 30, 2029, by which BTPDP grant recipients must report to the CDE on the number of participants who were issued bilingual authorizations, the number of previously authorized teachers who have participated in the program and subsequently returned to bilingual teaching assignments, and the number of teachers who are still working at least 50% of the time in a bilingual setting.
- 3) Requires the CDE, when administering the BTPDP, to meet quarterly with grant recipients to share promising practices and resources, and to resolve issues of implementation.

STAFF COMMENTS

- 1) ***Need for the bill.*** According to the author, "California not only faces a teacher shortage, but a bilingual teacher shortage. If we do not address these two critical issues simultaneously, over 1.1 million English learners in our state will be left without the support they need to succeed. This important measure will ensure some of our most vulnerable students are not left out of the teacher shortage solution."
- 2) ***Results from the first grant cycle of this program.*** The 2017 state budget provided \$10 million for the BTPDP (AB 99, Committee on Budget, Chapter 15, Statutes of 2017). According to the CDE, eight grants of approximately \$625,000 were awarded through the program.

According to the CDE, this program increased the number of teachers issued bilingual teaching authorizations, the number of teachers previously authorized who participate in the program and subsequently returned to bilingual teaching assignments, administrators seeking a bilingual authorization and inclusion in professional learning, and paraprofessionals that received a teaching credential and bilingual authorization. A report on the BTPDP provided by the CDE indicates the following:

- a) Over 400 teachers have received their bilingual authorization.
- b) Over 200 teachers and preservice students are still working on their teaching credential and bilingual authorization.
- c) Over 3,000 teachers and other school personnel were supported through professional learning, community outreach events, coaching, and enrollment in university level courses in bilingual education.
- d) Over 500 paraprofessionals were supported to receive professional learning, coursework towards earning their teaching credential, and support towards earning a bilingual authorization. Some of the programs supported professional learning only and others supported higher education coursework towards a degree and/or authorization.
- e) Over 1,000 administrators and other school staff participated in professional learning, some of whom earned their bilingual authorization as a result.
- f) Over 500 previously authorized teachers participated in professional learning and support services with the intention to remain in or return to a bilingual setting.
- g) Over 200 previously authorized teachers specifically returned to a bilingual setting as a result of participating in this program.

According to the CDE, although the grantees demonstrated high levels of success, each of them mentioned that they could expand their work and outreach further if there were additional funds to continue this program or another one very similar to this one. Each of the grantees have participants still in the process of furthering their education, professional learning, and interest in continuing this program. They also report having new participants interested in participating if new funding becomes available.

- 3) **Arguments in support.** Californians Together writes, “AB 1127 updates the BTPDP by recognizing the creation of Universal Transitional Kindergarten (UTK) and the impact its expansion is having on California’s need for more bilingual teachers for our students in preschool or UTK, while creating a new timeline for grant recipients to report the number of participants affected by the program by 2029. According to a March 2021 study by the Learning Policy Institute (LPI), California continues to experience an ongoing teacher shortage, exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, resulting in more under-prepared teachers teaching California students who would benefit from this program. LPI highlights California’s difficulty in finding teachers for special education, math, science, and bilingual education—categories that have historically had teacher shortages. Compounding the current shortage of bilingual teachers is the interest in and growth of bilingual and dual-language immersion programs in California schools due to the passage of Proposition 58 in 2016, which was supported by 73.52 percent of voters. Districts across the state are also scrambling for bilingual teachers in multiple languages to staff bilingual classrooms where other

languages are taught. This need is specifically seen in California's top five languages (Spanish, Vietnamese, Arabic, Cantonese, and Filipino), as well as a number of other languages. The BTPDP program would increase the capacity of bilingual teachers, thereby supporting LEAs in their quest to hire bilingual teachers for their bilingual and dual-language immersion programs. This is a "win-win" situation for all—for our students, for parents seeking bilingual programs for their children, and for our LEAs."

SUPPORT

State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Thurmond (co-sponsor)
California Association for Bilingual Education (co-sponsor)
Californians Together (co-sponsor)
Catalyst California
Los Angeles County Office of Education
Los Angeles Unified School District
Public Advocates Inc.
The Education Trust - West

OPPOSITION

None received

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