

Date of Hearing: April 23, 2025

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
Buffy Wicks, Chair
AB 865 (Mark González) – As Amended March 28, 2025

Policy Committee: Education

Vote: 9 - 0

Urgency: No

State Mandated Local Program: No

Reimbursable: No

SUMMARY:

This bill establishes the Dual Language Immersion Education Instructional Materials Grant Program, subject to a one-time appropriation of \$5 million, to increase available instructional materials in partner languages which facilitate dual language immersion programs (DLI) at local educational agencies (LEAs) and requires the California Department of Education (CDE) to administer the program.

Specifically, this bill establishes the Instructional Materials Grant A and Grant B under the Dual Language Immersion Education Instructional Materials Grant Program. It requires the CDE to allocate one-time grants of \$100,000, totaling \$3.5 million and \$1.5m, respectively, for the 2026-27 fiscal year, to a maximum of 50 LEAs (35 under Grant A, 15 under Grant B) through a competitive grant process. The bill requires CDE award Grant A funds to LEAs offering a DLI program in one of the top five most commonly spoken languages by English Learners (ELs) in the state and Grant B funds to LEAs offering a DLI program not in one of the top five most commonly spoken languages by ELs in the state. The bill also requires a grant recipient to develop and submit a plan for fund use for approval by the CDE and report to the CDE how grant funds were expended by June 29, 2029. Lastly, the bill requires the CDE submit a report to the Legislature by December 31, 2029, regarding the data reported by LEAs, and sunsets the requirements of the bill on January 2, 2030.

FISCAL EFFECT:

- 1) One-time Proposition 98 General Fund cost pressures of \$5 million for the Legislature to provide an appropriation for this bill's grant program.
- 2) Minor and absorbable costs to the CDE to administer the grant program.

COMMENTS:

- 1) **Purpose.** According to the author:

Teachers in DLI programs often struggle with a shortage of instructional materials that align with California state standards. Publishing companies may submit materials to CDE for review and approval. Currently, only two textbooks are approved for DLI programs—both for Spanish and limited to K-6 students. Textbook publishers do not support the vast diversity of languages for which

DLI programs exist, leaving teachers responsible for developing their own instructional materials, that is a time-consuming and difficult process. Without approved materials, schools may hesitate to implement DLI programs, and students in existing programs face educational inequities due to the lack of adequate resources.

2) **Background.**

DLI Programs. According to the CDE, DLI programs are language learning and academic instruction for native speakers of English and native speakers of another language. The goals of DLI programs are language proficiency and academic achievement in students' first and second languages, and cross-cultural understanding. This program is typically found in kindergarten through grade eight, but may be offered through grade twelve.

High Demand for DLI Program Funding. AB 130 (Committee on Budget), Chapter 44, Statutes of 2021, appropriated \$10 million for a DLI grant program, to award 25 one-time grants over a period of 3 fiscal years to eligible entities to expand or establish DLI programs.

According to the CDE, LEAs submitted over 300 letters of intent to apply, and the CDE received 160 applications. Funding was sufficient to support only 25 grants. The CDE cites as a barrier that some entities did not have enough native English speakers to develop DLI programs that call for a 50:50 composition of native English speakers and native speakers of the target language. This is particularly true of entities with high populations of ELs.

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