

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1322

As Reported by House Committee On: Education

Title: An act relating to dual language learning in early learning and K-12 education.

Brief Description: Concerning dual language learning in early learning and K-12 education.

Sponsors: Representatives Ortiz-Self, Gregerson, Caldier, Dolan, Doglio, Valdez, Orwall, Reeves, Bergquist, Hudgins, Ryu, Lekanoff, Macri, Jinkins, Kloba, Leavitt and Pollet.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Education: 2/14/19, 2/19/19 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Establishes grant programs to grow capacity for high quality dual language learning in the public schools, child care, and early learning programs, and to grow capacity for students to receive high quality heritage language learning.
- Requires the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) to adopt learning standards for biliteracy development.
- Creates a federal loan repayment program for teachers with an endorsement in bilingual education who work in dual language programs.
- Modifies duties of the OSPI and the Department of Children, Youth, and Families related to dual language services and supports.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 18 members: Representatives Santos, Chair; Dolan, Vice Chair; Paul, Vice Chair; Steele, Ranking Minority Member; McCaslin, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Volz, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Bergquist, Caldier, Callan, Corry, Harris, Kilduff, Ortiz-Self, Rude, Stonier, Thai, Valdez and Ybarra.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 1 member: Representative Kraft.

Staff: Megan Wargacki (786-7194).

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Background:

Dual Language Programs. A dual language (DL) program is an instructional model that provides content-based instruction to students in two languages, generally English and a target language other than English spoken in the local community, for example, Spanish, Somali, Vietnamese, Russian, Arabic, native languages, or indigenous languages. The goal of a DL program is for students to eventually become proficient and literate in both languages, while also meeting high academic standards in all subject areas. Typically, DL programs begin at kindergarten or first grade and continue through elementary school. Two-way DL programs begin with a balanced number of native and nonnative speakers of the target language so that both groups of students serve in the role of language modeler and language learner at different times. One-way DL programs serve only nonnative English speakers.

K-12 Dual Language Grant Program. In 2017 the K-12 DL Grant Program was created to grow capacity for high quality DL programs in the common schools and in state-tribal compact schools. The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) is the administrator of the program. Minimum application requirements were specified, such as: a description of how the program will serve the applicant's English learner (EL) population; a plan for student enrollment and outreach to families who speak the target language; a description of the pipeline for increasing the number of bilingual teachers; and a commitment to, and plan for, sustaining a DL program beyond the grant period.

Ten two-year grants were awarded to school districts and state-tribal compact schools interested in establishing or expanding a two-way DL program, or a one-way DL program in a school with predominantly EL students. Bonuses were awarded to applicants proposing to establish a DL program in a target language other than Spanish. The grant money must be used for DL program start-up and expansion costs, for example, staff training, teacher recruitment, and development and implementation of DL curriculum, but not for ongoing program costs.

The OSPI was required to facilitate DL learning cohorts for the grant recipients, including providing technical assistance and support. The grant program expires on July 1, 2020.

Early Learning Dual Language Initiatives. Since 2017 the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) has been required to: (1) work with community partners to support outreach and education for families around the benefits of native language development and DL learning; (2) create culturally responsive training and professional development resources on DL learning; and (3) support DL learning communities for teachers and coaches.

Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program. The state preschool program is called the Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP). The stated goal of the ECEAP is to help ensure children enter kindergarten ready to succeed. Children are eligible for the ECEAP if they are from families with annual incomes at or below 110 percent of the federal poverty level, qualify for school district special education services, or have developmental or environmental risk factors that could affect school success. Although the ECEAP prioritizes children who are 4 years old, children who are 3 years old are also eligible for the program. Approved ECEAPs receive state-funded support through the DCYF. Public

or private organizations, including school districts, community and technical colleges, local governments, and nonprofit organizations, may contract with the DCYF to become an ECEAP provider.

Essential Academic Learning Requirements. The OSPI is responsible for developing and revising the essential academic learning requirements (EALRs) that identify the knowledge and skills all public school students need to know and be able to do based on four basic education learning goals established by the Legislature. The OSPI is also responsible for adopting student learning standards aligned to the EALRs as grade level expectations and, in consultation with the State Board of Education, developing, maintaining, and revising a statewide academic assessment system that is designed to determine if students have mastered the EALRs. School districts must teach content aligned to the standards when the content area is required or offered, but districts do not ratify or formally adopt the standards, as curriculum choices are, with limited exceptions, determined by school districts.

Dual Language Teachers. An endorsement is the subject area in which a certificated teacher is authorized to teach, along with designated grade levels for that area. There are approximately 40 endorsements in Washington, not including a large number of career and technical education endorsements. In addition to subjects such as math, science, English, and history, there are approved endorsements in bilingual education and English language learners, both for all grade levels.

Loan Repayment for Teachers. The Office of Student Financial Assistance within the Washington Student Achievement Council may enter into agreements with teachers to repay all or part of a federal student loan in exchange for teaching service in an approved educational program. Washington has not funded loan repayments for teachers in recent years.

Summary of Bill:

Dual Language Grant Programs.

K-12 Dual Language Learning Grant Program. The K-12 Dual Language (DL) Learning Grant Program is converted to a permanent program. The program, which is subject to state funding, is made eligible to all local education agencies (LEAs), i.e. school districts, charter public schools, and state-tribal compact schools. Modifications are made to grant provisions, such that up to: (a) 10 LEAs interested in establishing a DL program in a target language that is one of the five most commonly spoken languages in the community, and in a school with predominantly English learners (ELs), may receive a two-year grant of up to \$80,000 once in a biennium; and (b) 10 LEAs interested in expanding a DL program in a target language that is one of the five most commonly spoken languages in the community, and in a school with predominantly ELs, may receive a two-year grant of up to \$40,000 once in a biennium.

In addition to previous requirements, the grant recipients must convene an advisory board to guide the development and continuous improvement of its DL program. The membership of the advisory board is specified. Finally, a biennial report is required that details the grant period's successes, best practices, lessons learned, and outcomes.

Heritage Language Grant Program. Subject to state funding, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) must develop and administer the Heritage Language Grant Program to grow capacity for students to receive high quality heritage language learning. "Heritage language" is defined as a target language other than English, spoken by an individual, a family, or a community, including the indigenous languages of native communities or the home languages of immigrant or refugee communities. "Heritage language program" is defined as a program designed to support language development of heritage language learners in the target language.

Within the Heritage Language Grant Program, the OSPI must establish two separate competitive grant application and award processes: one for heritage language programs for immigrant and refugee students; and one for indigenous language programs for native students. Grant awards must be limited to one award per program per biennium.

Beginning October 1, 2019, and by October 1 each odd-numbered year thereafter, the OSPI must award up to: (a) five two-year grants of up to \$75,000 to LEAs to create heritage language programs for immigrant and refugee students; and (b) five two-year grants of up to \$75,000 to state-tribal compact schools or school districts in partnership with an Indian tribe or nation to create indigenous language programs.

The OSPI must identify criteria for awarding the grants, evaluate applicants, and award grant funds. The OSPI must prioritize applicants that partner with community-based organizations. Applications for a heritage language program for immigrants or refugees must describe how the program will support ELs whose target language is one of the five most commonly spoken languages in the community, but is not supported with school-based enrichment opportunities for the language, such as a DL program. Applicants must agree to inform students and families of options to earn world language credits or the Washington State Seal of Biliteracy by, among other things, demonstrating proficiency in a language other than English.

The OSPI must promote the Heritage Language Grant Program by reaching out to immigrant and refugee communities and native communities. In addition, a biennial report is required that details the grant period's successes, best practices, lessons learned, and outcomes.

Early Learning Dual Language Grant Program. Subject to state funding, the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) must develop and administer the Early Learning DL Grant Program to grow capacity for high quality DL learning in child care and Early Childhood Education and Assistance Programs (ECEAP) in order to better meet the needs of ELs.

Within the Early Learning DL Grant Program, the DCYF must establish two separate competitive grant application and award processes: one for ECEAP contractors; and one for eligible child care providers. Grant awards must be limited to one award per contractor or provider per biennium.

Beginning September 1, 2019, and by September 1 each odd-numbered year thereafter, the DCYF must award up to: (a) five two-year grants of up to \$10,000 to ECEAP contractors to

support new ECEAP DL classrooms (with at least two awarded to tribal ECEAP contractors); and (b) five two-year grants of up to \$10,000 to eligible child care providers interested in establishing or converting to a DL program. An eligible child care provider is a provider who accepts state subsidy and is an active participant in the Early Achievers Program.

The DCYF must identify criteria for awarding the grants, evaluate applicants, and award grant funds. Applications must describe: (1) how the DL early learning program will reflect the languages spoken in the classroom, the school, and the community; (2) the applicant's DL early learning program family engagement strategy; (3) the applicant's plan for student enrollment and outreach to families who speak the target language; (4) the number of classrooms that the applicant will convert to DL instruction; and (5) the applicant's spending plan for the grant funds.

Grant funds must be used to support professional development and capacity-building activities. Grantees must participate in DCYF-conducted evaluations of program effectiveness.

Biliteracy Development Standards. By September 1, 2020, the OSPI must adopt essential academic learning requirements (EALRs) and grade level expectations (GLEs) for biliteracy development that are aligned with the EALRs for English language arts and the statewide student assessments. The EALRs and the GLEs must be periodically updated to incorporate best practices in biliteracy development.

Loan Repayment for Dual Language Program Teachers. Upon documentation of federal student loan indebtedness, the Office of Student Financial Assistance (OSFA) must enter into agreements with certificated teachers to repay all or part of the teacher's federal student loans in exchange for teaching service in a DL program in an approved educational program. Teachers eligible for loan repayment must hold an endorsement in bilingual education during the period of repayment.

At the end of the school year, a participant in the program must provide evidence to the OSFA that the requisite teaching service has been provided. Upon receipt of the evidence, the OSFA must pay the participant the agreed upon amount for one year of full-time teaching service or a prorated amount for less than full-time teaching service. To qualify for additional loan repayments, a participant must be engaged in continuous teaching service. The OSFA may approve leaves of absence from continuous service and other deferments as may be necessary.

The maximum payment amount is \$5,000 per year for up to four years. The OSFA may, at its discretion, arrange to make the loan repayment directly to the holder of the participant's federal student loans.

Agency Duties. The OSPI duties related to DL services and supports is modified, for example, by providing a list of technical assistance and support that must be provided to K-12 DL Learning Grant Programs and Heritage Language Grant Programs. The DCYF must establish one full-time employee DL specialist position to administer the Early Learning DL Grant Program and to continue and expand upon the activities in the DCYF's

Early Learning DL Initiative. Provisions describing similar DCYF duties related to DL learning outreach and professional development support are repealed.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Preliminary fiscal note available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) Educators, administrators, and superintendents across the state are looking for ways to serve students who are immigrants and refugees who do not speak English. There are a variety of programs for English learners (EL) across the state, but many programs fall short of the benchmark that we want for all students. English learners often have the largest opportunity gap in academic achievement. The most effective teaching method for ELs is a dual language (DL) program. In Washington, about 4 percent of ELs are taught in DL programs. These DL programs must be expanded so that all students can achieve.

This bill proposes to continue grant funding for DL programs that expanded and grew DL programs in the state. The grant funding allowed teachers and administrators to attend professional conferences, visit other DL programs, and collaborate with colleagues. It is also important to support less commonly taught heritage and indigenous languages. Students in classes that support these languages not only develop language skills, but develop a stronger cultural and linguistic identity.

It is significant that this bill includes state funding to support native languages being taught in public schools and early learning spaces. The history of the Native Americans includes forcible removal of children from their families and communities so they could be placed in boarding schools and assimilated into mainstream American culture. This resulted in many generations of Native American people losing access to their native language and culture. Many languages are under threat of extinction, and some have completely disappeared as communities lose their last fluent elder.

The childcare system is not designed to support immigrant childcare providers, who provide culturally relevant, bilingual care. These assets are not seen as valuable as a college degree. It is important to raise bilingual children in an environment that celebrates their multicultural heritage. Living in a country where bilingual children have access to their home languages and other world languages will increase their potential as a global citizen. Learning multiple languages will give children a love of learning about other cultures and traveling, and will teach tolerance and acceptance of people who are different from themselves.

This bill recognizes the language assets of multilingual learners and what they bring to school. It emphasizes the importance of all students becoming bilingual and biliterate. It emphasizes incentivizing bilingual individuals to become educators in DL classrooms. The

bill supports an educational model that closes opportunity gaps for ELs and Native American students.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Ortiz-Self, prime sponsor; Kristin Percy Calaff, Highline Public Schools; Hodon Bulale and Nimco Bulale, OneAmerica; and Patty Finnegan, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.