

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2018 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

House Bill 642
Ways and Means

(Delegate Gutierrez, *et al.*)

Education - Dual Language Immersion Program - Authorization

This bill requires the State Board of Education to establish guidelines for implementation of dual language immersion programs in public schools by July 1, 2019. A dual immersion program integrates native English speakers and native speakers of another language for academic content instruction in both English and a partner language, beginning in elementary school. A dual immersion program also requires (1) the use of one teacher who provides instruction in English only and another teacher who provides instruction in a partner language and (2) half of the instructional content to be taught in English and half of the instructional content to be taught in the partner language. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2018.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None. The program guidelines can be developed using existing resources.

Local Effect: None. The bill does not require local school systems to implement a dual language immersion program or to use the guidelines developed under the bill.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Bill Summary: The guidelines established by the State board must include professional learning for teachers in dual language programs; access to dual language resources for teachers, students, and parents; equity in access to dual language programs; and communication to promote and disseminate information about the importance and value of dual language learning.

Current Law/Background: Each local school system must establish an English language development program for those students who have been identified as English learners by means of a home language survey as well as the State-approved English language proficiency placement assessment. Each program must involve certified English for Speakers of Other Languages teachers.

Chapter 232 of 2016 established a Maryland Seal of Biliteracy Program to recognize public high school graduates who have attained proficiency in speaking, reading, and writing one or more languages in addition to English. The purpose of the program is to promote linguistic proficiency and cultural literacy in one or more languages in addition to English and to provide recognition of the attainment of those skills by affixing a Seal of Biliteracy to the student's diploma or transcript at graduation.

According to reports submitted to the U.S. Department of Education, as many as 35 states (including Maryland) have dual immersion programs, but many of these states do not require these programs. At least three Maryland public schools, one in Montgomery County (Kemp Mill Elementary) and two in Prince George's County (Cesar Chavez Elementary and Capitol Heights Elementary), provide some form of a dual language program. There are also full-immersion programs at several Maryland public schools.

Local Fiscal Effect: The bill does not require local school systems to implement a dual language immersion program or to use the guidelines developed under the bill. Therefore, local school system expenditures are not directly affected. Local expenditures may increase for school systems that choose to implement a program established under the bill, given that the program would entail the use of two teachers instead of one bi-lingual teacher.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Baltimore City; Montgomery County; Maryland State Department of Education; Department of Legislative Services

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