



# MONTGOMERY COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

*Expanding Opportunity and Unleashing Potential*

850 Hungerford Drive ♦ Room 123 ♦ Rockville, Maryland 20850

**BILL:** HB1255  
**TITLE:** Education – Bilingual Learner Prekindergarten Grant Program  
**DATE:** 3/6/2020  
**POSITION:** SUPPORT  
**COMMITTEE:** Ways and Means  
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The Montgomery County Board of Education (Board) **supports** HB1255.

Longitudinal research has exhibited that all students (monolingual and multilingual) in Dual Language programs often do as well or better than their peers that are learning only in English. Some of the conclusions are that language learning correlates with higher academic achievement, development of reading abilities, language transfer skills, and higher scores on standardized assessments. It has also been determined that early childhood language development programs provide the students with a stronger development of print awareness. Early intervention to develop dual language learning sets children on a trajectory to receive a Seal of Biliteracy on their High School Diploma.

Additionally, Dual Language students:

- Develop strong reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills in two languages.
- Often outperform monolingual peers on standardized assessments that are learning only in English.
- Develop cognitive flexibility and problem-solving skills.
- Demonstrate greater understanding, appreciation and respect for other cultures and languages.
- Are prepared for a globalizing world and job market.
- Are the majority in early childhood classrooms with approximately 70 to 80 percent being multi-language learners.
- Are enrolled in Prekindergarten classrooms that are staffed at a 1:10 ratio.

The state of Maryland is currently collaborating with school districts and WIDA to roll out The WIDA Early Years Framework, an evidence-based program focused specifically on the language development of students in Pre-K. These funds will assist us as a district with providing training using the WIDA Early Years Framework with the goal of supporting multilingual learners and their families and enhancing school readiness. Along with building local capacity in supporting dual language children and families, the partnership also includes support for strategic statewide planning and the rollout of WIDA Early Years tools and resources.

For these reasons, the Board **supports** this legislation and urges a **favorable** report.