

My name is Kaitlyn Hammel, and I've lived and worked in District 46 for 5 years now. I work at a dual language immersion school in the Canton/Highlandtown neighborhood and am a proponent of supporting English language learners by teaching them in both English and the native language. From my students at Boston College for my Masters in Education, where I studied literacy, language, and culture, I learned that the sheltered English immersion approach is not the most effective way to teach English. A dual immersion program is the most successful in teaching language as students are able to continue learning to read, write, and communicate in their home language while they are learning the English language as well. By stopping the child's education in their home language, often Spanish, children are not as successful in the long run in English, according to multiple studies.

I am a proponent of this bill for several reasons. We need to create a teacher pipeline. We need to set our Maryland students up for the most success in the long run. Having a bilingual teacher certification would be an asset. Being multilingual is an asset. Our young English learners, at times, are tracked in a lower track due to lack of language ability. This is not just for these students; often students have the math knowledge, language skills, etc., but they are only able to express this in their native language, which is mostly Spanish.

I am a proponent of HB1098.