



COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
Department of Teaching and Learning, Policy and Leadership

HB 0056 SUPPORT
**Public Schools - Dual Language Education - Teacher Certification,
Program Implementation, and Study**

Ways and Means Committee
January 24th, 2023

Dear Chair Atterbeary, Vice Chair Washington, and Members of the Ways and Means Committee:

As a **researcher** of bilingual language learning and a **teacher educator** in the College of Education at the University of Maryland, with more than 20 years' experience teaching and conducting research in public schools to promote educational equity and multilingualism, and as a **parent** of children who have attended dual language programs in Maryland, I urge you to **support** of HB 56.

HB 56 would advance the *Blueprint for Maryland's Future* by offering a pathway to better prepare Maryland's **future teaching force** to meet the needs of our diverse student population.

Decades of research have documented the benefits of multilingualism, biliteracy, and dual language education programsⁱ. Dual language education offers benefits for *both* English language learners (ELs) and English speaking students who wish to acquire an additional language. Dual language programs that share the goals of bilingualism, biliteracy, academic achievement, and sociocultural competence have been shown to offer the **most promise** in **closing the achievement gap**ⁱⁱ. Research has found that instructional models that use multilingual learners' **home languages for literacy instruction promote better outcomes** in terms of academic achievement, English proficiency, graduation rates, and attitudes toward schoolⁱⁱⁱ.

When **well implemented**, dual immersion bilingual programs lead to **superior academic achievement**, multilingualism, and offer **multiple benefits** across linguistic, cultural, racial and socioeconomic differences. Implementing dual language bilingual programs moves a broader range of students towards ambitious outcomes, including attaining the state's **Seal of Biliteracy**.

Essential to **well implemented** dual language programs are **well prepared teachers**. Research^{iv} indicates ELs perform best when teachers are required to have state certification as a bilingual and/or an ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages)

teacher. The *National Dual Language Education Teacher Preparation Standards* adopted by the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation demonstrates the importance of a framework to support dual language educator preparation programs.

Highly qualified teachers in bilingual/dual language programs need to possess not only the knowledge and skills necessary for their grade level/**content** area but must also understand the process of **second language** and **bilingual acquisition**, biliteracy, **bilingual child development** and **intercultural communication**.

Schools across the state are facing a **shortage** of qualified bilingual educators, which could compromise the quality of dual language program implementation. In our research with dual language schools, **teachers and administrators are asking for help** to better prepare teachers for dual language programs.

Currently, 26 states^v offer teacher certification in bilingual education, and **Maryland stands out** as a state with a great need for bilingual teacher certification pathways. Although Maryland has a rapidly growing bilingual population, unfortunately we are potentially **losing teachers** who will **go to other states** to earn their bilingual education certification (e.g. Delaware, New York and New Jersey offer bilingual teacher education programs). Maryland could follow models in other states that have developed alternative certification programs, graduate certificates and teacher residency programs to grow the supply of bilingual educators. Maryland has the opportunity to be an educational leader and join the states across the country that are expanding bilingual teacher education programs.

The College of Education at the University of Maryland (UMCP), where I teach, is well positioned to develop and support teacher preparation for bilingual/dual language teachers. In addition to our teacher preparation programs in elementary, secondary ESOL, and World Language we have developed a Dual Language Post-Baccalaureate certificate to promote professional learning among in-service teachers. Our university is poised to work with other IHEs/**teacher preparation programs across the state** to bring together expertise to create a bilingual teacher certification program. **To advance this initiative**, we need the legal framework presented in HB 56.

As a teacher educator and as a certified bilingual and ESOL teacher with over 20 years experience in our schools, I am confident that this bill (HB 56) is an important opportunity to **strengthen education in Maryland**. As a parent of multilingual children who have benefitted from dual language programs in Maryland's Public Schools, I fully support the expansion of dual language programs across the state that would include more students from diverse backgrounds and would require well prepared teachers.

I respectfully request a favorable vote for HB 56.

Melinda Martin-Beltrán, PhD

ⁱ Billings, E., Martin-Beltrán, M., & Hernandez, A. (2010). Beyond English development: Bilingual approaches to teaching immigrant students and English Language Learners. In C. Faltis & G. Valdés (Eds.) *National Society for the Study of Education Yearbook: Education, Immigrant Students, Refugee Students, and English Learners*, (pp. 384–413). New York: Teachers College Press.

Martin-Beltrán, M. (2009). Cultivating space for the language boomerang: The interplay of two languages as academic resources. *English Teaching: Practice and Critique*, 8(2), 25-53.

Martin-Beltrán, M. (2010). The two-way language bridge: Co-constructing bilingual language learning opportunities. *The Modern Language Journal*, 94(2), 254-277.

Martin-Beltrán, M. (2014). “What do you want to say?” How adolescents use translanguaging to expand learning opportunities. *International Multilingual Research Journal*, 8(3)208-230. doi:10.1080/19313152.2014.914372

ⁱⁱ See research findings in the following:

Ramirez, J. D., Pasta, D. J., Yuen, S. D., Billings, D. K., & Ramey, D. R. (1991). *Longitudinal study of structured English immersion strategy, early-exit, and late-exit bilingual education programs for language minority children* (Vols. 1–2, US Department of Education Report, Contract No. 300–87–0 156). San Mateo, CA: Aguirre International.

Rolstad, K., Mahoney, K., & Glass, G. V. (2005). The big picture: A meta-analysis of program effectiveness research on English language learners. *Educational policy*, 19(4), 572-594.

Thomas, W. P., & Collier, V. (1997). *School Effectiveness for Language Minority Students*. NCBE Resource Collection Series, No. 9.

Thomas, W. P., & Collier, V. P. (2002). *A national study of school effectiveness for language minority students' long-term academic achievement*. Center for Research on Education, Diversity & Excellence.

Wells, A. S., Fox, L., and Cordova-Cobo, D. (2016). *How Racially Diverse Schools and Classrooms Can Benefit All Students*. New York City and Washington, DC: The Century Foundation.

Thomas, W. P., & Collier, V. P. (2012). *Dual language education for a transformed world*. Dual Language Education of New Mexico/Fuente Press.

ⁱⁱⁱ See also August & Hakuta, 1997; August & Shanahan, 2006; Bialystok & Hakuta, 1994; Collier, 1992; Cummins, 1984; Genesee et al., 2006; Krashen, 1985, 1996; Lambert & Tucker, 1972; Fillmore & Valadez, 1986

^{iv} Boyle, A., August, D., Tabaku, L., Cole, S., & Simpson-Baird, A. (2015). *Dual language education programs: Current state policies and practices*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education Office of English Language Acquisition.

^v Boyle, A., August, D., Tabaku, L., Cole, S., & Simpson-Baird, A. (2015). *Dual language education programs: Current state policies and practices*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education Office of English Language Acquisition.

“states have broadcast specific goals or value statements supporting dual language programs or bilingual education more generally. Utah, Delaware, and Georgia have established special dual language initiatives. In Utah, this initiative emerged when key state leaders—including the governor, state superintendents, and state senators—established legislation and issued goals for developing dual language programs throughout the state. Delaware’s dual language initiative includes goals such as maximizing students’ proficiency in a world language in order to develop advanced-level language skills in secondary school; providing a rich academic environment in both English and dual language classrooms; developing students’ abilities to work successfully in multiple cultural settings; and offering a rich, culturally diverse experience for the entire school community. Delaware Governor sponsored the World Language Expansion Initiative in 2011. The initiative supports and funds the development of dual language programs, with the intention of equipping students across the state with advanced-level language skills to compete in the multilingual global economy. Four Delaware Department of Education staff members support the development of these programs, and field agents support dual language program teachers at a ratio of one field agent per 15 teachers.” (Boyle et al, 2015 p. 84, p.88)