

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2018 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

House Bill 1154
Ways and Means

(Delegate Gutierrez, *et al.*)

Teachers and Teacher Preparation Programs - Bilingual Certification and Instruction

This bill requires the Professional Standards and Teacher Education Board (PSTEB), by July 1, 2019, to establish a certification program for bilingual teachers in elementary, middle, and high schools. PSTEB must adopt regulations to implement the bill. PSTEB and the State Board of Education, jointly, must set standards and guidelines for the delivery of bilingual instruction by teacher preparation programs in the State. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2018.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: PSTEB and the State Board of Education can implement the bill using existing resources. Teacher preparation programs are not required to establish bilingual education programs; thus, any impact will be due to a public institution's choice to establish a program.

Local Effect: None. However, if bilingual teaching certification is required to teach in an immersion program, local school systems may have increased difficulty in finding teachers.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law/Background: PSTEB is a semi-autonomous board composed of 25 members. PSTEB and the State Board of Education share the authority to develop rules and regulations for the certification of teachers and other professional personnel and

requirements for the preparation of teachers and other education personnel, excluding specified social workers.

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 (ESOL) 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 language immersion programs. Four local school systems in Maryland currently offer language immersion programs at the elementary, middle, or high school level. 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.

Teachers in immersion programs in Maryland are required to be certified in a content area (*e.g.*, elementary education if teaching in elementary school) but there is currently no requirement to hold a special certification indicating they are fluent in another language. The Maryland State Department of Education advises that if bilingual teaching certification is required to teach in an immersion program, local school systems may have increased difficulty in finding teachers. The [2016-2018 Maryland Teacher Staffing Report](#) identified ESOL, Spanish, and French as critical teacher shortage areas.

Maryland colleges and universities independently decide what teacher preparation programs to offer based on the needs of the local school systems, resources available to the institution or department, and enrollment trends. Currently, Johns Hopkins University; McDaniel College; Notre Dame of Maryland University; Salisbury University; University of Maryland, College Park Campus; and University of Maryland Baltimore County, offer coursework in ESOL.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Maryland State Department of Education; Maryland Higher Education Commission; University System of Maryland; Morgan State University; St. Mary's College of Maryland; Department of Legislative Services

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nb/rhh

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