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AB-1127 Teachers: professional development: Bilingual Teacher Professional Development Program: eligibility. (2023-2024)

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Assembly Bill No. 1127

CHAPTER 830

An act to amend Section 52202 of the Education Code, relating to teachers, and making an appropriation therefor.

[Approved by Governor October 13, 2023. Filed with Secretary of State October 13, 2023.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 1127, Reyes. Teachers: professional development: Bilingual Teacher Professional Development Program: eligibility.

(1) Existing law establishes the Bilingual Teacher Professional Development Program, administered by the State Department of Education, in consultation with the Commission on Teacher Credentialing, for teachers seeking to provide instruction in bilingual and multilingual settings. Existing law, for the 2023–24 fiscal year, appropriates \$20,000,000 from the General Fund to the Superintendent of Public Instruction for purposes of the program, to be available for grants totaling \$4,000,000 each fiscal year, from the 2023–24 fiscal year to the 2027–28 fiscal year, inclusive, as provided.

Existing law requires the department to allocate grant funding to eligible local educational agencies, including county offices of education, school districts, charter schools, or a consortia of local educational agencies for purposes of providing professional development services to teachers or paraprofessionals who satisfy specified requirements, but exempts participants who are currently enrolled in, or have completed, the Asian Language Bilingual Teacher Education Program from those requirements that apply to teachers.

This bill would also exempt participants who are currently enrolled in, or have completed, programs to support bilingual teacher education in languages in the classroom, such as Arabic, Cantonese, Mandarin, Spanish, Tagalog, and Vietnamese, and other languages, as represented in an instructional program, from those specified requirements that apply to teachers. By expanding the scope of eligibility for purposes of an appropriation, the bill would make an appropriation.

(2) Existing requires Bilingual Teacher Professional Development Program grant recipients to provide to the department, by July 1, 2026, a preliminary report, and, by January 1, 2029, a final report, on the number of participants who were issued bilingual authorizations, the number of previously authorized teachers who have participated in the program and subsequently returned to bilingual teaching assignments, and the number of teachers who are still working at least 50% of the time in a bilingual setting.

This bill would extend the deadline for the final report by one year to January 1, 2030.

(3) Funds appropriated by this bill would be applied toward the minimum funding requirements for school districts and community college districts imposed by Section 8 of Article XVI of the California Constitution.

Vote: majority Appropriation: yes Fiscal Committee: yes Local Program: no

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. Section 52202 of the Education Code is amended to read:

52202. (a) The Bilingual Teacher Professional Development Program shall be administered by the department in consultation with the Commission on Teacher Credentialing. The department shall issue grants to applicants through a competitive process.

(b) (1) The department shall allocate grant funding to eligible local educational agencies, including county offices of education, school districts, charter schools, or a consortia of local educational agencies for purposes of providing professional development services to teachers or paraprofessionals who satisfy the requirements of subdivision (c). Grant recipients may partner with community colleges, public or private four-year institutions of postsecondary education, and professional organizations or nonprofit organizations with English learner expertise.

(2) The department shall issue a minimum of five grants under the program.

(c) (1) A teacher shall be eligible for professional development services pursuant to subdivision (b) if the teacher possesses a teaching credential or an education specialist credential authorizing the holder to teach pupils with exceptional needs, and does either of the following:

(A) Possesses an authorization to provide instruction to English learners pursuant to Section 44253.3, 44253.4, or 44253.7, and has provided instruction solely in English-only classrooms for three years or more.

(B) Is fluent in a language other than English, and seeks an authorization pursuant to Section 44253.3, 44253.4, or 44253.7 to provide instruction to English learners.

(2) A school paraprofessional employee shall be eligible for professional development services if the employee is fluent in a language other than English, seeks to work with English learners or in a bilingual program, and intends to enter a pathway to become a credentialed teacher who holds a bilingual authorization.

(3) Notwithstanding paragraph (1), participants who are currently enrolled in, or have completed, the Asian Language Bilingual Teacher Education Program shall be eligible for professional development services.

(4) Notwithstanding paragraph (1), participants who are currently enrolled in, or have completed, programs to support bilingual teacher education in languages in the classroom, such as Arabic, Cantonese, Mandarin, Spanish, Tagalog, and Vietnamese, and other languages, as represented in an instructional program, shall be eligible for professional development services.

(d) In selecting a grant recipient pursuant to subdivision (b), the department shall ensure that an applicant indicates how it plans to increase the number of teachers who obtain a bilingual authorization as a result of participation in the program and increase the number of teachers with a bilingual authorization who return to teaching in a bilingual or multilingual setting.

(e) In awarding funding to eligible applicants pursuant to subdivision (b), the department shall adopt criteria demonstrating an applicant's ability to provide professional development services. The adopted criteria shall include, but are not limited to, all of the following:

(1) Demonstrated commitment to bilingual and multilingual education and bilingual teacher development.

(2) Demonstrated capability to fully prepare teachers to obtain bilingual authorizations and to improve or update a teacher's knowledge and skills relating to biliteracy, English language acquisition, English language development, pupil assessment in English and other languages, and instruction in the components of a high-quality bilingual or multilingual education program.

(3) The availability of bilingual education staff with demonstrated experience and knowledge of bilingual and multilingual education for purposes of providing professional development programs.

(4) Demonstrated management and support services necessary to efficiently and effectively use funding provided under subdivision (b) to help meet the demand for bilingual teachers.

(5) Matching funds, or other in-kind matching resources, offered by the applicant in support of a professional development program funded pursuant to this article.

(6) Capacity to conduct an evaluation of a professional development program offered by the applicant for the purpose of identifying areas of strength, areas requiring improvement, and recommendations for making improvement.

(f) The department shall ensure grant recipients selected for purposes of this article, to the maximum extent possible, are balanced with regard to geographic regions and urban and rural settings.

(g) The department shall meet quarterly with grant recipients to share promising practices and resources, and to resolve issues of implementation.

(h) (1) By January 1, 2022, grant recipients awarded funds appropriated pursuant to Section 85 of Chapter 15 of the Statutes of 2017 shall provide a final report to the department on the number of participants who were issued bilingual authorizations, the number of previously authorized teachers who have participated in the program and subsequently returned to bilingual teaching assignments, and the number of teachers who are still working at least 50 percent of the time in a bilingual setting.

(2) The project performance period for Bilingual Teacher Professional Development grant funds appropriated pursuant to Section 85 of Chapter 15 of the Statutes of 2017 is January 1, 2018, to June 30, 2021, inclusive.

(i) (1) By July 1, 2026, grant recipients awarded funds appropriated pursuant to Section 119 of Chapter 48 of the Statutes of 2023 shall provide a preliminary report, and, by January 1, 2030, a final report, to the department on the number of participants who were issued bilingual authorizations, the number of previously authorized teachers who have participated in the program and subsequently returned to bilingual teaching assignments, and the number of teachers who are still working at least 50 percent of the time in a bilingual setting.

(2) The project performance period for Bilingual Teacher Professional Development grant funds appropriated pursuant to Section 119 of Chapter 48 of the Statutes of 2023 is January 1, 2024, to June 30, 2029, inclusive.