



**CALIFORNIANS
TOGETHER**

CHAMPIONING THE SUCCESS
OF ENGLISH LEARNERS

March 7, 2023

The Honorable Al Muratsuchi, Chair
Assembly Education Committee
State Capitol
1020 N Street, Suite 159
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: AB 1127 (Reyes)
Position: Co-Sponsor**

Dear Chair Muratsuchi:

The California Association for Bilingual Education (CABE), Californians Together, and State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Thurmond are pleased to co-sponsor Assembly Bill (AB) 1127 (Reyes), which revises and re-establishes the Bilingual Teacher Professional Development Program (BTPDP), which was previously used as a successful grow-your-own tool to address the bilingual teacher shortage across California.

The prior BTPDP ended in 2021 and allowed eligible local educational agencies (LEAs), including county offices of education, school districts, charter schools, institutions of higher education (IHEs), or a consortium of multiple LEAs, to apply for state funds to provide professional learning opportunities. BTPDP applicants were encouraged to partner with at least one school or department of education within a public or private nonprofit four-year IHE, which is in good standing, and prepare teachers or other regional providers who were actively implementing a Commission on Teacher Credentialing-approved Bilingual Authorization program.

AB 1127 updates the BTPDP by recognizing the creation of Universal Transitional Kindergarten (UTK) and the impact its expansion is having on California's need for more bilingual teachers for our students in preschool or UTK, while creating a new timeline for grant recipients to report the number of participants affected by the program by 2029.

According to a March 2021 study by the Learning Policy Institute (LPI), California continues to experience an ongoing teacher shortage, exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, resulting in more under-prepared teachers teaching California students who would benefit from this program. LPI highlights California's difficulty in finding teachers for special education, math, science, and bilingual education—categories that have historically had teacher shortages.

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Compounding the current shortage of bilingual teachers is the interest in and growth of bilingual and dual-language immersion programs in California schools due to the passage of Proposition 58 in 2016, which was supported by 73.52 percent of voters. Districts across the state are also scrambling for bilingual teachers in multiple languages to staff bilingual classrooms where other languages are taught. This need is specifically seen in California's top five languages (Spanish, Vietnamese, Arabic, Cantonese, and Filipino), as well as a number of other languages. The BTPDP program would increase the capacity of bilingual teachers, thereby supporting LEAs in their quest to hire bilingual teachers for their bilingual and dual-language immersion programs. This is a "win-win" situation for all—for our students, for parents seeking bilingual programs for their children, and for our LEAs.

CABE, Californians Together, and State Superintendent Thurmond thank you for your continued support and leadership to address California's bilingual teacher shortage and urge your "AYE" vote when AB 1127 is heard in the Assembly Education Committee.

Should you have any questions regarding our requests, feel free to reach out to CABE's Legislative Advocate Jennifer Baker at jbaker@m-w-h.org, Californians Together Legislative Advocate Cristina Salazar at cristina@californianstogether.org, or California Department of Education Legislative Representative Michelle Warshaw at MWarshaw@cde.ca.gov.

Sincerely,



Jan Gustafson Corea
Chief Executive Officer, CABE



Martha Hernandez
Executive Director, Californians Together



Tony Thurmond
State Superintendent of Public Instruction, California Department of Education



cc: The Honorable Eloise Reyes, California State Assembly
Members, Assembly Education
Committee
Tanya Lieberman, Consultant, Assembly Education
Committee
Marguerite Reyes, Consultant, Assembly Education
Committee
Bob Becker, Consultant, Assembly Republican Caucus