

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2021

A N A C T

RELATING TO EDUCATION -- THE WORLD LANGUAGE AND DUAL LANGUAGE IMMERSION ACT

Introduced By: Senators Ciccone, Euer, Calkin, Acosta, Valverde, and Bell

Date Introduced: March 04, 2021

Referred To: Senate Education

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Title 16 of the General Laws entitled "EDUCATION" is hereby amended by
2 adding thereto the following chapter:

3 CHAPTER 54.1

4 THE WORLD LANGUAGE AND DUAL LANGUAGE IMMERSION ACT

5 **16-54.1-1. Definitions.**

6 For purposes of this chapter:

7 (1) "Dual language immersion" or "DLI" means a method of instruction that promotes a
8 student's full proficiency in all aspects of English and another language. DLI programs educate
9 students using both English and a partner language for academic instruction and may divide the
10 day by language of instruction. Dual immersion programs may further include two-way immersion
11 programs that teach English learners (ELs) alongside English-speakers who are learning the partner
12 language, and one-way immersion programs that serve a student population with limited to no
13 proficiency in the target language. Teachers pursuant to these programs must meet appropriate state
14 certification requirements and be highly qualified as defined by RIDE in their content area.

15 (2) "World language" or "WL" means any language other than English, including all
16 modern languages, Classical languages, American Sign Language, and Native American
17 languages.

18 **16-54.1-2. Dual language program fund authorized.**

1 (a) The Rhode Island department of elementary and secondary education shall establish a
2 dual language program fund and a position of world language and dual language immersion
3 specialist within the department of elementary and secondary education (RIDE). For purposes of
4 funding this chapter, the department of elementary and secondary education shall allocate two
5 hundred thousand dollars (\$200,000) per year, from its budget as enacted:

6 (1) Of which, not less than fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) would be allocated to carry out
7 the program to invest in high quality, evidence informed, voluntary, dual language models that
8 expand upon the current landscape of dual language programs and to allow successful existing
9 programs to serve more English learners. Recipients of funding may include local education
10 authorities.

11 (2) Of which, remaining funds shall be used for the establishment of a world language and
12 dual language education specialist position at RIDE. The purpose of programs supported by this
13 fund shall be to provide pathways to bilingualism and biliteracy for Rhode Island students and to
14 close the achievement gap that currently exists for English learners in Rhode Island schools.

15 (b) The commissioner of elementary and secondary education shall designate a world
16 language and dual language immersion specialist to:

17 (1) Provide technical assistance and collaborate with LEAs in the establishment, expansion,
18 and improvement of world language and dual language courses and programs;

19 (2) Oversee implementation of dual language immersion pilot;

20 (3) Ensure the inclusion of world language and dual language immersion program data,
21 including seal of biliteracy assessment data, in ongoing surveys of Rhode Island LEAs in order to:

22 (i) Determine the types of existing world language and dual language immersion courses
23 and programs that successfully integrate technology into classroom instruction;

24 (ii) Identify exemplary model world language and dual language immersion programs; and

25 (iii) Identify and address staff development needs of current world language and dual
26 language immersion teachers, preservice teachers, paraprofessionals, and teacher preparation
27 programs.

28 (4) Perform other duties as determined by RIDE.

29 (c) The specialist shall create a competitive request for proposals process to allocate
30 funding for the pilot program for the fiscal year no later than October 1 of each year. The request
31 for proposals should fund only programs with evidence of model effectiveness, clear procedures
32 for ensuring program quality and an ongoing commitment to, and plans for, advanced evaluation
33 of results. Priority should be given to those LEAs with a high incidence of English learner students.

34 (d) The Rhode Island department of elementary and secondary education shall appropriate

1 the necessary position and funding for said position prior to June 30, 2022.

2 **16-54.1-3. Reporting.**

3 On or before October 31, 2022, and annually thereafter by October 31, the Rhode Island
4 department of elementary and secondary education shall report back to the general assembly and
5 the governor on the status, progress, and feasibility of the continuation of the pilot program
6 authorized by this chapter.

7 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF

A N A C T

RELATING TO EDUCATION -- THE WORLD LANGUAGE AND DUAL LANGUAGE
IMMERSION ACT

- 1 This act would establish and require funding for a world language and dual language
- 2 immersion program.
- 3 This act would take effect upon passage.

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