

March 2021

87th Legislative Session Recommendations



Texans Care for Children, Philanthropy Advocates, Intercultural Development Research Association, and a variety of partners and stakeholders launched the Texas Early Childhood English Learner Initiative in early 2020.

We want to ensure that more Texas children are successful inside and outside the classroom and that Texas maximizes the impact of the historic education investments made in 2019 via HB 3.

Our goals are to ensure more English Learners:

- become strong readers by third grade;
- become fluent and literate in both English and their home language;
- overcome the uneven learning opportunities experienced during the pandemic; and
- learn in settings where educators, principals, and parents have the tools they need to support them.

The Initiative recognizes that early childhood experiences — in the home, child care, pre-k, and other early grades — are the foundation for success in later grades and later in life.

Legislative Priorities

- **SB 560 by Sen. Lucio/HB 2258 by Rep. Guerra:** Create a state strategic plan to cultivate bilingualism across all early learning systems and set clear benchmarks to increase the number of bilingually certified teachers, the number of students who are bilingual or multilingual, and the availability of high-quality dual language immersion classes in pre-k through 12th grade.
- **SB 1101 by Sen. Creighton/HB 2256 by Rep. Guerra:** Create a certification in Bilingual Special Education to build a pipeline of school leaders who are equipped to serve the specific linguistic, cultural, and academic needs of English Learner children with disabilities and developmental delays in pre-k through 12th grade.
- **SB 2081 by Sen. Menendez/HB 41 by Rep. Talarico:** Update high-quality prekindergarten standards to include a maximum class size of 22 students and a student - teacher ratio of no more than 11:1
- **HB 1744 by Rep. Guerra:** Reduce programmatic barriers for educators and pre-service teachers to access bilingual education certification programs
- **SB 2065 by Sen. Menendez:** Protect and increase state financial support for bilingual education and ESL programs in schools through per-pupil funding.
- **SB 2125 by Sen. Blanco/HB 4421 by Rep. Meza:** Ensure school districts update their literacy plans to include information on dual language programs and report data in both program languages, rather than just English outcomes.

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