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Support HB 1581 by Rep. Guerra / SB 152 by Sen. Menéndez

HB 1581 and SB 152 enable TEA to monitor bilingual and dual language programs and provide targeted training to support emergent bilingual students' outcomes.

Nearly 1 in 4 Texas Students is Emergent Bilingual – Lawmakers Must Ensure Effective Bilingual Instruction to Reach the State's Early Literacy Goals

Emergent Bilingual students have always been a significant part of the state's student population. **However, the educational outcomes of these students require greater focus. In the 2023-24 school year, just 33 percent of Emergent Bilingual students met grade level in third-grade reading, compared to 46 percent of students statewide.**[1]

Dual Language Immersion has consistently been shown to produce better educational outcomes for emergent bilingual students (compared to Transitional Bilingual programs or English as a Second Language Programs).[2] However, only 21 percent of the nearly 1.3 million Emergent Bilingual students were participating in dual language programs in the 2023-24 school year, in part due to the longstanding shortage of certified bilingual teachers in Texas pre-k through 12th grade.[3] Additionally, schools implement dual language immersion and bilingual programs inconsistently, with varying quality, which hurts student outcomes. To create the most comprehensive strategies to improve early literacy for emergent bilingual students, the Texas Education Agency needs the ability to support schools, track trends and educational outcomes, and inform policy and funding decisions.

The state's Emergent Bilingual Strategic Plan, mandated by the Legislature in 2021, recommended that the Legislature give TEA the authority to better support the implementation of bilingual and language programs. Lawmakers should enable TEA to identify underperforming bilingual and ESL programs, provide timely technical assistance, and improve literacy outcomes. TEA has this authority for special education but needs legislative action to have the same authority for bilingual education. By focusing on program effectiveness, school systems can receive actionable feedback to support emergent bilingual students.

To support effective bilingual instruction, HB 1581 and SB 152:	Enable TEA to monitor bilingual and dual language programs and provide technical assistance to support Emergent Bilingual learning outcomes.	Provide training materials to school administrators to improve student outcomes for bilingual and dual language immersion programs.

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[1] Commit Partnership. (2024). STAAR Dashboard. Retrieved at: https://commitpartnership.org/dashboard/visualizations/staar-results-dashboard
[2] Texas Education Agency (2016). Effective Practices in Bilingual Education Program Model Implementation: A Review of the Literature. Retrieved at https://tea.texas.gov/academics/special-student-populations/english-learner-support/bilingual-education-programs-literature-review-jan-2019.pdf
[3] Texas Education Agency (2024). Enrollment in Texas Public Schools 2023-24. Retrieved at: https://tea.texas.gov/reports-and-data/school-performance/accountability-research/enroll-2023-24.pdf