

BILL ANALYSIS

S.B. 159
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Public Education
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

According to interested parties, school districts across Texas are experiencing issues finding bilingual education educators. Current law requires a teacher assigned to a bilingual education program to be appropriately certified for bilingual education by the State Board for Educator Certification, but, the parties note, this falls short of specifying which bilingual education models are recommended. S.B. 159 seeks to address this issue.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE IMPACT

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly create a criminal offense, increase the punishment for an existing criminal offense or category of offenses, or change the eligibility of a person for community supervision, parole, or mandatory supervision.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

ANALYSIS

S.B. 159 amends the Education Code to specify the different program models for which a teacher assigned to a bilingual education program must be appropriately certified for bilingual education by the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC). The bill requires one category of bilingual education certification for a teacher assigned to a bilingual education program using the transitional bilingual/early exit program model or the transitional bilingual/late exit program model. The bill also requires a teacher assigned to a bilingual education program using a dual language immersion/one-way or two-way program model to be appropriately certified by SBEC for bilingual education for the component of the program provided in a language other than English and for bilingual education or English as a second language for the component of the program provided in English. The bill authorizes a school district that provides a bilingual education program using a dual language immersion/one-way or two-way program model to assign a teacher certified by SBEC for bilingual education for the language other than English component of the program and a different teacher certified by SBEC for bilingual education or English as a second language to the English language component. The bill removes the requirement that a teacher assigned to a special language program other than an English as a second language program be appropriately certified for English as a second language by SBEC. The bill's provisions apply beginning with the 2015–2016 school year.

EFFECTIVE DATE

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, September 1, 2015.