Education—dual language immersion programs.

Sponsored by: Senator(s) Wasserburger and Rothfuss and Representative(s) Stubson

A BILL

for

1 AN ACT relating to public schools; expanding a financial assistance program through the department of education to continue dual language immersion programs within public schools; granting rulemaking authority and imposing reporting requirements; providing an appropriation; and providing for effective dates.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Wyoming:

Section 1. W.S. 21-13-336 is created to read:

(a) Supplemental financial assistance for dual language immersion programs shall be available to school districts to augment resources contained within the education resource block grant model for instruction in foreign languages. Upon qualification, schools within any school district may receive supplemental financial assistance under this section for offering foreign language programs requiring use of a target foreign language during not less than fifty percent (50%) of student-teacher contact time during each school day of student enrollment in the program.

(b) Supplemental financial assistance under this section provided by the department shall be used by school districts to initiate dual immersion programs within its schools. On behalf of any school within the district, a school district may apply to the department of education for supplemental financial assistance under this section on or before April 15 of the school year immediately preceding the school year of which financial assistance is requested. Application shall be on a form and in a manner prescribed by the department and application review and selection shall be in accordance with a process established by
department rule and regulation which is based upon
demonstrated ability of the applicant school to completely
and effectively implement a dual immersion program with the
receipt of supplemental financial assistance under this
section.

(c) Expenditures of financial assistance under this
section shall be restricted to training and acquisition of
instructional capacity necessary to initiate a dual
immersion program within the school. Assistance under this
section for any qualifying school within an applicant
district shall be limited to twenty thousand dollars
($20,000.00), plus one hundred percent (100%) reimbursement
of the amount actually expended by the applicant district
to obtain a United States visa for an instructor to teach
courses in accordance with this section, if applicable.
Supporting documentation, such as receipts, invoices or
other documentation identified by rule and regulation of
the department, shall be submitted with the request for
reimbursement. Upon receipt of assistance under this
section, that one (1) school within the district shall not
again be eligible to receive assistance under this section.
(d) The department shall notify each applicant district of the eligibility of any school within the district to receive financial assistance by May 1 of the school year preceding that school year for which application is made, together with the estimated amount to be available to the district for that school for the applicable school year. Assistance shall be distributed by the department on or before August 15 of the applicable school year.

(e) Financial assistance to each qualifying school within an applicant school district shall be made by the department from amounts appropriated by the legislature from the school foundation program account for purposes of the program established by this section, and shall be in addition to the foundation program amount computed for that district under W.S. 21-13-309(p). If there is an insufficient amount within the foundation program account from amounts appropriated by the legislature for financial assistance under this section for any school year, the department shall make a pro rata reduction in financial assistance payments among all qualifying schools within applicant districts for that school year. The department
may withhold a portion or the entire amount to be
distributed to any school under this section until receipt
of appropriate documentation verifying proper expenditure
in accordance with this section. Any appropriated amounts
not expended or encumbered under this section as of July 1
of that school year immediately following the school year
for which the appropriation applies shall revert to the
foundation program account.

(f) Each recipient district shall report to the
department of education on expenditures of amounts
distributed under this section by July 1 of that school
year immediately following that school year for which
payment of supplemental assistance was received by that
district.

Section 2. 2014 Wyoming Session Laws, Chapter 26,
Section 2, Section 206, Footnote 6 is repealed.

Section 3. The department of education shall
promulgate rules and regulations implementing the
application and selection process for eligibility to
receive supplemental finance assistance under W.S.
21-13-336, as created under section 1 of this act, in sufficient time to inform school districts of the availability of supplemental assistance under this act, and in sufficient time for districts to submit application for assistance by April 15, 2015.

Section 4.

(a) For the period commencing July 1, 2015 and ending June 30, 2016, up to four hundred thousand dollars ($400,000.00) is appropriated from the school foundation program account for purposes of funding the supplemental financial assistance program under W.S. 21-13-336, as created under section 1 of this act. The department shall report expenditures of amounts appropriated under this subsection to members of the joint education interim committee on or before November 1, 2015.

(b) The funds appropriated by subsection (a) of this section shall be reduced by any unexpended funds appropriated to the department of education by 2014 Wyoming Session Laws, Chapter 26, Section 2, Section 206, Footnote 6 as of June 30, 2015 and any remaining funds shall be
utilized for the purpose of funding the supplemental financial assistance program under W.S. 21-13-336, as created under section 1 of this act.

(c) For the period commencing on the effective date of this act and ending June 30, 2016, the department of education is authorized two (2) permanent full-time positions. The positions shall be classified as one (1) executive management 2, or the equivalent thereof, and one (1) office support specialist, or the equivalent thereof. In addition to any other appropriation to the department by this act, there is appropriated not to exceed one hundred eighty-five thousand dollars ($185,000.00) for the salary and benefits of the department employees under this section. The two (2) positions authorized by this section shall be included in the department’s 2017-2018 standard budget request.

Section 5.

(a) Except as provided in subsection (b) of this section, this act is effective July 1, 2015.
(b) Sections 3 and 4(b) and (c) of this act are effective immediately upon completion of all acts necessary for a bill to become law as provided by Article 4, Section 8 of the Wyoming Constitution.