



DOA:.....Kretschmann, BB0158 - Aid for English Language Acquisition

**FOR 2025-2027 BUDGET -- NOT READY FOR INTRODUCTION**

**AN ACT ...; relating to:** the budget.

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*Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau*

**EDUCATION**

**PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION**

***Aid for English language acquisition***

This bill creates a new categorical aid for school districts and independent charter schools to offset the costs of educating limited-English proficient (LEP) pupils.

Under current law, a school board is required to provide a bilingual-bicultural education program to LEP pupils who attend a school in the school district if the school meets any of the following thresholds:

1. Within a language group, 10 or more LEP pupils are enrolled in kindergarten to grade three.
2. Within a language group, 20 or more LEP pupils are enrolled in grades four to eight.
3. Within a language group, 20 or more LEP pupils are enrolled in grades nine to twelve.

All school boards are required to educate all LEP pupils, but only school boards that are required to provide bilingual-bicultural education programs are eligible under current law for categorical aid targeted toward educating LEP pupils. Under current law, in each school year, DPI distributes \$250,000 among eligible school districts whose enrollments in the previous school year were at least 15 percent LEP pupils, and DPI distributes the amount remaining in the appropriation account to eligible school districts on the basis of the school districts' expenditures on the required bilingual-bicultural education programs during the prior school year.

Under the bill, beginning in the 2025-26 school year, DPI must annually pay each school district and each operator of an independent charter school an amount equal to \$500 times the number of LEP pupils enrolled in the school district or attending the charter school in the previous school year. This new categorical aid is in addition to aid already paid under current law and is not conditioned on whether the school board or independent charter school is required to provide a bilingual-bicultural education program.

**BILL**

For further information see the state and local fiscal estimate, which will be printed as an appendix to this bill.

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*The people of the state of Wisconsin, represented in senate and assembly, do enact as follows:*

**SECTION 1.** 20.255 (2) (cc) of the statutes is amended to read:

20.255 (2) (cc) *Bilingual-bicultural education aids.* The amounts in the schedule for bilingual-bicultural education programs aid under subch. VII of ch. ~~115~~ s. 115.995.

**SECTION 2.** 20.255 (2) (ce) of the statutes is created to read:

20.255 (2) (ce) *Aid for English language acquisition.* A sum sufficient for aid under s. 115.9955.

\*\*\*\*NOTE: This SECTION involves a change in an appropriation that must be reflected in the revised schedule in s. 20.005, stats.

**SECTION 3.** 115.993 (title) of the statutes is amended to read:

**115.993** (title) **Report Reports on bilingual-bicultural education and pupil counts.**

**SECTION 4.** 115.993 of the statutes is renumbered 115.993 (1).

**SECTION 5.** 115.993 (2) of the statutes is created to read:

115.993 (2) Annually, on or before August 15, a school board and the operator of a charter school established under s. 118.40 (2r) or (2x) shall report to the state superintendent the number of limited-English proficient pupils enrolled in the school district or attending the charter school in the previous school year and the classification of those pupils by language group.

**SECTION 6.** 115.995 (intro.) of the statutes is amended to read:

**115.995 State aids.** (intro.) Upon receipt of the report under s. 115.993 (1),

**BILL****SECTION 6**

if the state superintendent is satisfied that the bilingual-bicultural education program for the previous school year was maintained in accordance with this subchapter, the state superintendent shall do all of the following:

**SECTION 7.** 115.995 (1) of the statutes is amended to read:

115.995 (1) From the appropriation under s. 20.255 (2) (cc), divide proportionally, based upon costs reported under s. 115.993 (1), an annual payment of \$250,000 among school districts whose enrollments in the previous school year were at least 15 percent limited-English proficient pupils. Aid paid under this subsection does not reduce aid paid under sub. (2).

**SECTION 8.** 115.9955 of the statutes is created to read:

**115.9955 Aid for English language acquisition.** (1) Beginning in the 2025-26 school year and annually thereafter, from the appropriation under s. 20.255 (2) (ce), the department shall pay each school district and each operator of a charter school established under s. 118.40 (2r) and (2x) \$500 per limited-English proficient pupil enrolled in the school district or attending the charter school in the previous school year, based on the report under s. 115.993 (2).

(2) Receipt of aid under s. 115.995 does not preclude receipt of aid under this section.

(END)