



Fiscal Note

Legislative Council Staff

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HB 26-1028: SECOND LANGUAGE EDUC PROGRAM FOR STUDENTS

Prime Sponsors:

Rep. Garcia; Velasco
Sen. Cutter

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Fiscal note status: The fiscal note reflects the introduced bill.

Summary Information

Overview. The bill creates a bilingualism diploma endorsement and allows a third-party organization to certify the endorsement for students in public schools.

Types of impacts. The bill is projected to affect the following areas on an ongoing basis:

- State Expenditures
- Institutions of Higher Education
- School Districts

Appropriations. The bill requires an appropriation of \$29,144 to the Colorado Department of Education.

Table 1
State Fiscal Impacts

Type of Impact	Budget Year FY 2026-27	Out Year FY 2027-28
State Revenue	\$0	\$0
State Expenditures	\$36,205	\$24,137
Transferred Funds	\$0	\$0
Change in TABOR Refunds	\$0	\$0
Change in State FTE	0.3 FTE	0.2 FTE

Table 1A
State Expenditures

Fund Source	Budget Year FY 2026-27	Out Year FY 2027-28
General Fund	\$29,144	\$19,429
Cash Funds	\$0	\$0
Federal Funds	\$0	\$0
Centrally Appropriated	\$7,061	\$4,707
Total Expenditures	\$36,205	\$24,137
Total FTE	0.3 FTE	0.2 FTE

Summary of Legislation

Under current law, a local education provider (LEP) may grant a diploma endorsement in biliteracy to a student who demonstrates proficiency in English, and at least one foreign language. This bill allows students to demonstrate English proficiency and foreign language proficiency through additional methods.

The bill creates a separate diploma endorsement for bilingualism. The bill defines bilingualism as speaking, listening, and understanding of English and another language. Students seeking a diploma endorsement in bilingualism must demonstrate oral proficiency in English and one or more foreign languages by achieving a passing score on a nationally recognized test or by providing a body of evidence or equal rigor to an advanced placement test in a foreign language.

If a high school student attends an LEP that does not offer a diploma endorsement of biliteracy or bilingualism, the student may seek an endorsement from an institution of higher learning or educational nonprofit organization that has been approved by the Colorado Department of Education (CDE). The department must set uniform educational requirements for endorsements offered by an entity other than the student's LEP. The institution or nonprofit organization offering an endorsement may charge a fee to the student's LEP.

Background

[Senate Bill 2017-123](#) created the authority for an LEP to offer a seal of biliteracy diploma endorsement. The CDE provides guidance to LEPs concerning the minimum requirements for offering the seal, and reviews online applications to verify that programs include approved course work and assessments. The LEPs verify all academic requirements and grant the seal on a student's diploma at graduation.

State Expenditures

The bill increases state expenditures in the CDE by about \$31,000 in FY 2026-27, and about \$20,000 in FY 2027-28. These ongoing costs, paid from the General Fund, are summarized in Table 2 and discussed below.

Table 2
State Expenditures
Colorado Department of Education

Cost Component	Budget Year FY 2026-27	Out Year FY 2027-28
Personal Services	\$29,144	\$19,429
Operating Expenses	\$0	\$0
Capital Outlay Costs	\$0	\$0
Centrally Appropriated Costs	\$7,061	\$4,707
Total Costs	\$30,909	\$20,135
Total FTE	0.3 FTE	0.2 FTE

Colorado Department of Education

Staffing

The CDE will require 0.3 FTE in FY 2026-27 in the Office of Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Education to create guidance for a bilingualism diploma endorsement, revise the program website and application materials, create requirements for approving third party endorsements, and develop an application and approval process for institutes of higher learning and educational nonprofit organizations.

Beginning FY 2027-28 and ongoing, the CDE will require 0.2 FTE for ongoing administration of the endorsement programs, providing technical assistance to LEPs and endorsing entities, reviewing and approving coursework and assessments for biliteracy and bilingualism, and supporting parents and students seeking information on endorsement options.

Centrally Appropriated Costs

Pursuant to a Joint Budget Committee policy, certain costs associated with this bill are addressed through the annual budget process and centrally appropriated in the Long Bill or supplemental appropriations bills, rather than in this bill. These costs, which may include employee insurance, supplemental employee retirement payments, indirect cost assessments, and other costs, are shown in Table 2 above.

Institutions of Higher Education

The bill allows an institution of higher learning to endorse diplomas. If state-funded institutions of higher education or community colleges partner with schools and school districts to become an approved entity, state expenditures and revenue for those institutions may increase. Costs may include certifying and verifying tests, proctoring assessments, evaluating bodies of evidence, recordkeeping, coordinating with LEPS, and complying with CDE rules. An approved institution may charge a fee to the school or district, increasing that institution's revenue. Institutional revenue from fees is not subject to TABOR.

School District

School districts, charter schools, and Boards of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) that operate schools but do not offer a diploma endorsement in biliteracy or bilingualism may choose to partner with an IHE or educational nonprofit organization to provide the endorsements. The outside organization may charge the school or district a fee for the administrative services of providing the endorsement.

State Appropriations

For FY 2026-27, the bill requires a General Fund appropriation of \$29,144 to the Colorado Department of Education, and 0.3 FTE.

Effective Date

The bill takes effect 90 days following adjournment of the General Assembly sine die, assuming no referendum petition is filed.

State and Local Government Contacts

Education

Higher Education