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HOUSE BILL NO. 1139

Offered January 8, 2020

Prefiled January 7, 2020

A BILL to amend the Code of Virginia by adding sections numbered 22.1-23.3, 22.1-207.7, 22.1-207.8, and 22.1-207.9, relating to English language learner students; guidance, information, programs, and policies.

Patrons—Keam, Tran, Guzman and Lopez

Referred to Committee on Education

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That the Code of Virginia is amended by adding sections numbered 22.1-23.3, 22.1-207.7, 22.1-207.8, and 22.1-207.9 as follows:

§ 22.1-23.3. English language learner students; duties.

The Superintendent of Public Instruction shall:

1. Develop guidance for school boards to improve the process for the identification of English language learner students for eligibility for gifted and talented programs and address the underrepresentation of such students in such programs that includes methods for (i) recognizing and addressing potential challenges in such process and (ii) facilitating professional development for and collaboration among the teachers involved in such process, including teachers in English language learner programs and teachers in gifted and talented programs;

2. Encourage any school board of a local school division in which English language learner students struggle to achieve at a high level to prioritize the utilization of the state funds available to the school board to improve such levels of achievement; and

3. In consultation with experts who possess knowledge and experience in assessing the language proficiency and academic performance of English language learner students, annually collect and report (i) data on the English proficiency level, program placement, and academic language development, including oral academic language, of each English language learner student and (ii) appropriate and effective measures for improving assessments for and the English proficiency of English language learner students.

§ 22.1-207.7. English language learner students; instructional programs.

A. In any school division in which 20 or more English language learner students in one language classification are enrolled at any grade level in kindergarten through grade five, the school board shall provide a (i) one-way or two-way dual language immersion program or (ii) early exit or late exit transitional bilingual program for such students, as such programs are defined by the Board of Education pursuant to regulation.

B. Each school board shall provide a content-based or pull-out English as a second language program, as such programs are defined by the Board of Education pursuant to regulation, for any enrolled English language learner student who does not receive instruction pursuant to subsection A.

§ 22.1-207.8. English language learner students; certain policies.

Each school board shall adopt policies to:

1. Support oral and written communication between school board employees and the parents of each enrolled student in such parents' native language;

2. Pursue community support to accelerate the literacy and achievement of English language learner students;

3. Conduct school satisfaction surveys in the native language of each surveyed individual, when practicable; and

4. Ensure that literacy strategies sent to the parents of enrolled English language learner students who read below grade level are tailored to promote reading proficiency in English and the student's native language.

§ 22.1-207.9. English language learner students; Head Start Programs; certain information.

Any Head Start program offered in the Commonwealth shall provide the parents of English language learner students with oral and written information to monitor the program's impact on their children's English and native language proficiency and development.

INTRODUCED

HB1139