

Education Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: SB-1391

AN ACT CONCERNING THE TRANSPARENCY OF MULTILINGUAL LEARNER

Title: DATA.

Vote Date: 3/12/2025

Vote Action: Joint Favorable Substitute

PH Date: 3/3/2025

File No.: 337

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Education Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:

The bill outlines requirements for tracking data on multilingual learners and bilingual education, and it creates a Parent Bill of Rights to ensure transparency, access, and support for multilingual students and their families in Connecticut's public schools. It requires academic progress data for bilingual education students and program evaluation data to be included in the statewide public school information system. The bill also expands the existing Bill of Rights for multilingual learners, giving students and their parents (or guardians) the right to access data on: (1) the academic progress of students in bilingual education programs and (2) the quality of these programs, all available through the statewide information system. This will increase transparency and accountability in bilingual education, providing families with the tools they need to support their children's success and ensure all multilingual learners have equal opportunities to thrive in a more inclusive school environment.

SUBSTITUTE LANGUAGE:

The S language changes the effective date to January 1, 2026

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

[Charlene Russell-Tucker, Commissioner, Connecticut State Department of Education](#): states that it supports the intent of the bill but suggests that Section 1 may be redundant, as they already collect the required data. The SDE proposes combining the existing data into a single, comprehensive annual report and requests an extension of the deadline for submitting

this report to allow enough time for data analysis. Additionally, the Department welcomes the inclusion of the Parent Bill of Rights but notes that it will require additional translations.

[TJ Nuccio, Childrens Policy Analyst, CWCSEO](#): states that this bill proposes data transparency regarding multilingual learners, including reporting on their participation in bilingual, English as a second language, and dual-language programs. He explains that this would help the Connecticut State Department of Education and school districts assess the effectiveness of their educational programs. He also emphasizes that additional multilingual learner data already collected by the CSDE should be made publicly accessible, as it would help policymakers, school districts, and community organizations better understand the needs of multilingual learners and improve support. Lastly, he highlights that additional recommendations focus on equity, ensuring that multilingual learners, particularly those who face other challenges (e.g., poverty, disabilities), receive the targeted support they need to succeed in their education. He urges the bill to be passed.

[Tanya Hughes, Executive Director, CHRO](#): supports the bill, emphasizing the importance of data in identifying disparities between multilingual learners and their peers. She explains that publicly available data on bilingual education progress and program quality is crucial for multilingual families, as it enables them to make informed decisions about their children's education. She also highlights that data is essential for assessing the effectiveness of bilingual programs and addressing the unique challenges faced by multilingual students.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

[Kathleen Callahan, Director of Policy and Civic Engagement, Connecticut Cradle to Career Coalition](#): states that the Coalition advocates for policies that improve equity, resilience, and long-term prosperity, especially for youth and it emphasizes data-driven solutions, including the importance of making educational data accessible and useful for decision-making. She provided testimony that Many districts in Connecticut, particularly those in the Coalition's network, like Danbury, Bridgeport, Norwalk, Waterbury, and Stamford, have much higher percentages of MLL students compared to the state average. She argues that multilingual learners are seen as an asset to the community, but there's a need for better support to ensure they achieve English proficiency and succeed academically. She states that the Coalition believes that making data publicly available will help improve educational equity and allow for better support of MLL students and their families. She also urges the committee to include more data points in the reporting requirements.

[MLL Coalition, Multilingual Learners Success Coalition](#): states that it would help improve transparency and provide essential data on multilingual learners in Connecticut schools. The Coalition states that the bill would require data on the number of MLL students participating in bilingual, ESL (English as a Second Language), dual language programs and the performance of MLL students on state exams, specifically the Connecticut master examinations, and adds in additional data on The number of MLL students who are low-income or have disabilities, the specific non-English languages spoken by MLL students in each district, and the number of district and school-level staff who are teaching bilingual students under Bilingual Certification. The Coalition states that they lack detailed, district-level data that could help them understand the specific needs of these communities. The Coalition urges legislation to pass the bill, as it will help empower Connecticut communities to

come together around values of democracy, equity, non-discrimination, and evidence-based policy.

[Nate Fox, Staff Attorney, Center for Children's Advocacy](#): states that this bill will increase transparency and accessibility of data on multilingual learners. He believes that by making this data publicly available, the state can improve bilingual education, better support MLL students, and ensure that educational strategies are effective. He also urges the inclusion of additional data on MLL students' needs, such as information on free lunch eligibility, disabilities, language diversity, and bilingual-certified staff, to further strengthen the understanding of these students' challenges and needs.

[Daisy Torres-Hill, Educator, Hartford Public Schools](#): states that the bill addresses the critical need for data on multilingual learners and will help provide access to information on their academic progress in bilingual education programs, as well as the quality of these programs. This is important because it ensures that multilingual students are enrolled in effective programs and are receiving the right strategies for success. She also suggests that the bill should include additional publicly accessible data already collected by the Connecticut State Department of Education. She argues that multilingual learners face the challenge of learning new content in a language with which they are not familiar, and it is important to acknowledge their extraordinary achievements. This information should be easily accessible, understandable, and actionable for educators, families, and policymakers. Same testimony from:

- [Kara Casimiro, Superintendent, Danbury Public Schools](#)
- [Sabrina Buckwalter, Resident, Stamford](#)
- [Willie Smith Jr., Resident, Bridgeport](#)
- [Giovana Morales, Resident, East Hartford](#)
- [Tashiiyana Drakes, Resident, Bridgeport](#)
- [Jacqueline Cabrera, Resident, Danbury](#)

[Fran Rabinowitz, Executive Director, CAPSS](#): states that this bill aims to enhance the transparency and accessibility of data related to multilingual learners. She emphasizes the need for stringent safeguards to protect student privacy as multilingual learner data is incorporated into the statewide public information system. Lastly, she states that this bill is essential in guiding these efforts and ensuring meaningful improvements in bilingual education. Same testimony from:

- [Maureen Brummett, Superintendent of Schools, Newington Public Schools](#)

[Orlando Rodriguez, Research and Policy Development Specialist, Connecticut Education Association](#): offered testimony in support of the bill and recommends additional language to better understand and address academic gaps among all English/Multilingual Learners, not just students in bilingual education programs. He states that the existing reporting requirements of C.G.S. § 10-17m should be extended to all ELs/MLs, as this will provide more actionable data to target remedial instruction for all ELs/MLs. He also recommends that the results of mastery examinations be disaggregated into the following mutually exclusive categories: never ELs/MLs, on-time ELs/MLs, former ELs/MLs, long-term ELs/MLs, and at-risk for long-term ELs/MLs.

[Matthew Conway, Jr., Superintendent of Schools, Derby Public Schools](#): states that the transparency and accessibility of multilingual learner data would significantly enhance our ability to develop targeted supports and measure the effectiveness of our bilingual education initiatives. He emphasizes the critical importance of implementing robust privacy protections as the data is incorporated into the statewide system. Lastly, he states that the data should be made available through this bill and will help inform evidence-based approaches to better serve our multilingual learners.

[Lisa Hammersley, Executive Director, School and State Finance Project](#): states that while the Connecticut State Department of Education collects relevant data, much of it is not publicly available, making it harder for educators, policymakers, and families to make informed decisions. She urges that the bill should expand the publicly available data to include information on multilingual learners who qualify for free or reduced-price lunch, multilingual learners with disabilities, the non-English languages spoken by multilingual learners, and the number of bilingual-certified staff in each district. Lastly, she states that releasing this additional data would improve educational practices, ensure resources are effectively allocated, and support Connecticut's multilingual learner population, all while maintaining student privacy.

[Luis Ortiz, Director, Family Partnerships & Community](#): states the importance of providing multilingual learner families with access to essential information about their children's academic progress and educational programs. He argues that transparency in these areas is crucial for fairness and equity, allowing parents to make informed decisions and advocate for their children. He urges the legislation to pass the bill, especially considering national policy changes that could limit resources for multilingual communities. He views this as a vital step in ensuring that families have the tools they need to advocate for their children's education.

[Nicholas Borgesi, Student, UConn](#): states his support for advancing multiculturalism in Connecticut but emphasizes the importance of handling student data carefully. He expresses concern that English language learners may avoid educational opportunities due to fears of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) raids. He urges that multilingual students in Hartford public schools should be able to access education freely, as many of the youth in these programs aim to attend Connecticut State community colleges. He urges support for the bill, as it is seen as a step toward ensuring that English proficiency does not hinder their academic potential.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

None Expressed

Reported by: Matthew Domejczyk, Assistant Clerk Date: 4/3/25