Critical Languages & Dual Immersion

Critical Languages & Dual Immersion are two pilot programs created by the Legislature in 2007 and 2008 respectively. Both programs support the instruction of foreign languages in the public schools, with particular focus on certain target languages.

**Critical Languages**

The program assisted school districts and charter schools in developing language courses in “critical languages.” Critical languages are defined through the federal National Security Language Initiative. When the program was created, target languages included Chinese, Arabic, Russian, Farsi, Hindi, and Korean.

The Legislature created the program to recognize both the importance of students acquiring skills in foreign languages to successfully compete in a global society and to recognize the academic, societal, and economic development benefits associated through the acquisition of critical languages.

**Dual Language Immersion**

The program supports an instructional model that uses 50 percent of instruction in English and the other 50 percent in the target language. Program funding provides incentive for participating schools to start dual immersion opportunities for students.

Initially, the program focused on dual language immersion classrooms in the following target languages: Chinese, Spanish, French, and Navajo. Since the creation, 163 classrooms have been established and German and Portuguese were added as program languages.

### Critical Languages & Dual Immersion Appropriation History | FY 2008 to FY 2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fiscal Year</th>
<th>Critical Languages</th>
<th>Dual Immersion</th>
<th>Board Admin.</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tr>
<td>2008</td>
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<td>$0</td>
<td>$100,000</td>
<td>$330,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>2009</td>
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<tr>
<td>2010</td>
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<td>$270,000</td>
<td>$1,170,000</td>
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<td>2011</td>
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<td>$1,170,000</td>
<td>$2,050,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>$705,400</td>
<td>$270,000</td>
<td>$1,170,000</td>
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<td>2018</td>
<td>$3,165,400</td>
<td>$212,000</td>
<td>$3,377,400</td>
<td>$6,556,800</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

* Sometime in FY 2013-14 the Critical Languages Program was phased out and program funding was directed towards the Dual Language Immersion program.

### Budget History by Program - FY 2008 to FY 2018

- **2008**: $330,000
- **2009**: $330,000
- **2010**: $980,000 (197.0%)
- **2011**: $975,400 (0.5%)
- **2012**: $975,400 (0.0%)
- **2013**: $1,775,400 (82.0%)
- **2014**: $2,015,400 (13.5%)
- **2015**: $2,315,400 (25.9%)
- **2016**: $2,915,400 (8.6%)
- **2017**: $3,165,400 (19.0%)
- **2018**: $3,768,000 (19.0%)

* Notes:
  1. [2008] The Legislature also appropriated $100,000 ongoing for program administration to the State Board of Education.
  2. [2012] Since FY 2012, all funding increases designated through the Legislative budget process for Dual Immersion.
  3. [2017] The Legislature transferred $209,400 from the program to a new line-item at the State Board of Education for MSP Categorical Program Administration.
Discussion Items

- After 10 years of operation, statute continues to list both the Critical Languages and Dual Immersion programs as “pilot programs.” (See 53A-15-104 and 53A-15-105 respectively)

- Around 2013-14, administrators for the State Board of Education decided to end the Critical Languages program and shifted all funding towards the Dual Immersion program. The Legislature did not end the program through repealing the underlying statute or funding. It is unclear if the State Board of Education took formal action to approved this change.

- The original appropriation for the Critical Languages program included a separate appropriation of $100,000 in ongoing funding to support program administration at the State Board of Education. In FY 2017, the Legislature transferred $209,400 from the program to a new line-item at the State Board of Education titled “Minimum School Program Categorical Program Administration.” This transfer was made because administrative costs for the program were being billed to the MSP program, indicating the initial appropriation for administration was re-directed to other purposes at the State Board of Education. Due to prior accounting irregularities, it is likely not possible to determine where the original funding was re-directed.

- Both programs, and the original appropriation for administration, are part of larger line-items that contain many programs. Statute allows the executive branch to move funding within programs of a line-item.

Recommended Legislative Action

The Legislature may wish to consider the following:

- Evaluate the pilot status of both programs and determine if each program should continue as categorical programs within the Minimum School Program.

- In relation to the Critical Languages program, determine if the program should continue or repeal the corresponding statutory language. If the Legislature intends that the program continue, the Legislature has two options:
  1. Reallocate funding from the Dual Immersion program back to the Critical Languages program.
  2. Prioritize additional funding to support the Critical Languages program.

Office of the Legislative Fiscal Analyst

November 8, 2017