



Fiscal Note

Legislative Council Staff

Nonpartisan Services for Colorado's Legislature

HB 26-1028: SECOND LANGUAGE EDUCATION PROGRAM FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

Prime Sponsors:

Rep. Garcia; Velasco
Sen. Cutter

Fiscal Analyst:

Josh Abram, 303-866-3561
josh.abram@coleg.gov

Bill Outcome: Signed into Law

Drafting Number: LLS 26-0257

Version: Final Fiscal Note

Date: July 20, 2026

Fiscal note status: The final fiscal note reflects the enacted 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:

- Institutions of Higher Education
- School Districts

Appropriations. No appropriation is required.

Table 1
State Fiscal Impacts

Type of Impact	Budget Year FY 2026-27	Out Year FY 2027-28
State Revenue	\$0	\$0
State Expenditures	\$0	\$0
Transferred Funds	\$0	\$0
Change in TABOR Refunds	\$0	\$0
Change in State FTE	0.0 FTE	0.0 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 another LEP, an institution of higher learning, or an educational nonprofit organization. The institution or nonprofit organization offering an endorsement may charge a fee to the student's LEP.

Background

[Senate Bill 17-123](#) 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

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 choose to provide the endorsement, state expenditures and revenue for those institutions may increase. Costs may include certifying and verifying tests, proctoring assessments, evaluating bodies of evidence, recordkeeping and coordinating with LEPS. An institution of higher education 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.

Effective Date

The bill was signed into law by the Governor on June 2, 2026, and takes effect August 12, 2026, assuming no referendum petition is filed

State and Local Government Contacts

Education

Higher Education

The revenue and expenditure impacts in this fiscal note represent changes from current law under the bill for each fiscal year. For additional information about fiscal notes, please visit the [General Assembly website](#).