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HOUSE BILL 178

55TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2022

INTRODUCED BY

Brian G. Baca and James G. Townsend and Susan K. Herrera and
T. Ryan Lane

AN ACT

RELATING TO PUBLIC EDUCATION; AMENDING THE DEFINITION OF
"BILINGUAL LEARNER" TO INCLUDE AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO:

SECTION 1. Section 22-23-2 NMSA 1978 (being Laws 1973,
Chapter 285, Section 2, as amended) is amended to read:

"22-23-2. DEFINITIONS.--As used in the Bilingual
Multicultural Education Act:

A. "bilingual learner" means a student whose
bilingualism is emerging through the development of English and
a language other than English, including American sign
language;

B. "bilingual multicultural education program"
means a program using two languages, including English and the
home or heritage language, as a medium of instruction in the

1 teaching and learning process;

2 C. "culturally and linguistically different" means
3 students who are of a different cultural background than
4 mainstream United States culture and whose home or heritage
5 language, inherited from the student's family, tribe or country
6 of origin, is a language other than English;

7 D. "district" means a public school or any
8 combination of public schools in a district;

9 E. "English language learner" means a student whose
10 first or heritage language is not English and who is unable to
11 read, write, speak or understand English at a level comparable
12 to grade level English proficient peers and native English
13 speakers;

14 F. "heritage language" means a language other than
15 English that is inherited from a family, tribe, community or
16 country of origin;

17 G. "home language" means a language other than
18 English that is the primary or heritage language spoken at home
19 or in the community; and

20 H. "standardized curriculum" means a district
21 curriculum that is aligned with the state academic content
22 standards, benchmarks and performance standards."

23 SECTION 2. EFFECTIVE DATE.--The effective date of the
24 provisions of this act is July 1, 2022.