



AB 833: Binational Teachers Exchange Expansion Act

Summary:

AB 833 seeks to enhance educational opportunities by explicitly mandating teacher exchanges with Mexico within the framework of the state's teacher exchange programs. This bill requires the California Department of Education (CDE) to submit annual reports to relevant legislative committees, starting December 31, 2026. These reports will detail the operations and outcomes of the teacher exchange program, promoting transparency and ensuring accountability. By emphasizing exchanges with Mexico, AB 833 aims to foster a stronger educational collaboration that enriches the learning experiences of students across California.

Background:

In 1986, the U.S. Department of State recognized the California Department of Education as a sponsor for the Exchange Visitor Program, establishing what is commonly known as the Teacher Exchange Program. This initiative is pivotal, allowing credentialed teachers from other countries to come to California to teach in bilingual classrooms. Particularly in a state characterized by its growing multilingual population, this program seeks to address the critical need for qualified bilingual educators. Over the years, it has significantly contributed to the development of bilingual and bicultural education, especially in communities with a substantial number of English learners.

Despite its importance, the current structure of the program has faced challenges. Its limited scalability has hindered its ability to meet the burgeoning demand for bilingual education, especially considering California's rapidly growing Hispanic population and active promotion of cross-cultural education. The relatively small number of Mexican teachers within the exchange program reveals a missed opportunity to strengthen ties with Mexico while providing students access to educators who can impart both linguistic and cultural knowledge.

Problem:

The limitations of the existing teacher exchange program pose significant challenges. With California's demographic shifts and an increasing number of English Language

Learners, the demand for qualified bilingual teachers continues to rise. The underrepresentation of Mexican educators in the program exacerbates this issue, preventing schools from fully harnessing culturally relevant teaching practices that can benefit students. The program's current framework lacks the necessary oversight and data collection to assess its impact, leaving lawmakers and education officials without critical insights needed to improve and expand these initiatives.

Solution:

AB 833 is a comprehensive solution to these pressing challenges. By mandating the inclusion of exchanges with Mexico, the bill emphasizes the importance of bringing in Mexican educators who possess valuable expertise in Spanish-language instruction. This infusion of qualified professionals promises to enrich California's bilingual education programs significantly. The annual reporting requirement will not only track the progress of the exchange initiative but also highlight its impact on student outcomes in bilingual settings, guiding future policies and resource allocation.

As a result, AB 833 will facilitate the expansion of dual-language programs, strengthen community ties, increase the diversity of the teaching workforce, and provide enhanced support for English Language Learners. In embracing this proposal, California can ensure that its educational landscape reflects and supports the rich tapestry of its student population.

Staff Contact:

Kathya Santibanez, Field Representative
Assemblymember David Alvarez, District 80
Office: 619-498-8580
Kathya.Santibanez@asm.ca.gov

Support:

International Alliance Group (sponsor)
CA Association for Bilingual Education (CABE)
San Diego County Office of Education
San Diego Unified School District

