

House Education

02/05/2026 01:30 PM

HB26-1028 Second Language Educ Prog for High School Students

Typed Text of Testimony Submitted

Name, Position, Representing	Typed Text of Testimony
Inda Vergara For themselves	<p>Esteemed committee, sponsors of HB26-1028, and all members present, I address you with utmost respect.</p> <p>My name is Inda Vergara. I live in Colorado.</p> <p>I am a community leader with the Colorado State Parent Coalition (CSPC).</p> <p>Today, I am here in strong support of HB26-1028. Thank you for allowing this bill to proceed.</p> <p>Today, I will speak in favor of HB 1028.</p> <p>The importance of equity and recognition opportunities.</p> <p>The bilingual literacy seal was created to recognize students who are proficient in English and another language.</p> <p>These recognition practices do not reach everyone equally in Colorado.</p> <p>Only 55 out of 179 school districts offer this seal. The districts that do not offer it are mainly in rural communities, small schools, and districts without programs.</p> <p>These students do not have access, even if they have the skills.</p> <p>* In my experience as a mother, I always made sure that my three children attended bilingual classes, so that they could work in banks, companies, warehouses, or businesses.</p>

	<p>Bilingualism develops a way for the community to help each other.</p> <p>Bilingualism in Colorado boosts the economy by increasing the productivity of the workforce and improving access to diverse markets.</p> <p>This linguistic advantage promotes local economic growth and business competitiveness for the state of Colorado. For many multilingual students, it is not a school subject; it is part of their daily life.</p> <p>In this state, there have been positive changes, and it can be observed that in public health settings, effective communication with patients and their families is crucial for safe, high-quality care and interpretation. Having linguistic staff is not a formality but a crucial factor that has a significant influence.</p> <p>We are confident that continuing language education in our school systems will bring more benefits to communities.</p> <p>I am sure that bilingual speakers support the community of the State of Colorado because they have been studying in a school environment that promotes language education, which makes a difference.</p> <p>As we know, people who speak languages other than English use skills and techniques such as courtesy and dedication when communicating to ensure that families</p> <p>feel supported, understand everything they need to, and feel confident in their environment.</p> <p>More than 114,000 multilingual students attend Colorado public schools.</p> <p>Expanding access to the bilingual literacy seal and creating a bilingualism seal</p> <p>is a concrete way to tell students that their ideas matter, that their knowledge is a strength, not a barrier.</p> <p>Multilingualism opens doors to job advantages for future teachers, doctors, nurses, etc.</p>
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	<p>This bill helps many students develop their skills regardless of where they live.</p> <p>We respectfully ask for your vote in favor of HB26-1028</p> <p>THANK YOU FOR ALWAYS THINKING ABOUT THE FUTURE OF COLORADO.</p> <p>THANK YOU FOR YOUR VALUABLE TIME</p>
<p>Carmela Enriquez For themselves</p>	<p>Good afternoon, thank you to the education committee and the sponsors of HB26-1028.</p> <p>My name is Carmela Enriquez, I live in Greeley in Weld County, and I am part of the CSPC community.</p> <p>The school my children attend offers bilingual seals, but I find it unfair that other teenagers do not have the same opportunity. Knowing that many students can speak two languages and are not recognized for it can be frustrating.</p> <p>In fact, many parents do not have information about this seal. I found out about it recently, thanks to the Colorado State Parent Coalition, which educates us about the importance of being present in our children's school lives.</p> <p>I hope that in the future, schools will be able to have a conversation with families and tell us more about what each school has to offer.</p> <p>I have two young children, and I believe this is a great opportunity for their future. My children speak English and Spanish, and if this bill is passed, it could be very useful when they go to college and when they are adults looking for work. That is why today I kindly ask you to vote YES on HB26-1028.</p> <p>I appreciate the opportunity to express my opinion on this important bill.</p>
<p>Brenda Del Cid For themselves</p>	<p>Good afternoon, everyone, and thank you very much to the Education Committee and the sponsors of HB26-1028, Representative Lorena Garcia, Elizabeth Velasco, and Lisa Cutter.</p> <p>My name is Brenda Del Cid, and I live in the city of Frederick. I am a community leader with the Colorado State Parent Coalition (CSPC).</p> <p>I am a mother and grandmother, and I firmly believe in the education of children.</p>

	<p>Today, I am submitting my testimony in support of HB26-1028, and the reason I support it is because my children are bilingual, and my daughter earned her master's degree in ESL.</p> <p>She was an ESL teacher for her students' parents and helped her non-English-speaking students in the Adams School District.</p> <p>I am working hard to ensure that my three grandchildren become completely bilingual because I want them to feel proud of their Latin roots.</p> <p>In addition, there is scientific evidence of the benefits to the brain of speaking two or more languages. My two children are UNLV graduates with BAs in science, and as an immigrant, I am very grateful to this country for offering support to our children so they can achieve their goals and dreams.</p> <p>This bill will fill all students with pride for their hard work.</p> <p>I ask that, in recognition of our students, you support HB26-1028.</p> <p>Thank you.</p>
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Estimado(a) Presidente(a) y miembros del Comité:

Mi nombre es Nancy Rodríguez y escribo para expresar mi apoyo a la ley HB-1028. Como miembro de la comunidad, creo firmemente que nuestros niños bilingües merecen que su habilidad sea reconocida sin que sus familias tengan que pagar clases adicionales para obtener un sello en sus certificados.

Muchos niños ya son bilingües gracias a su hogar, su cultura y su esfuerzo diario. Poner barreras económicas para reconocer esa habilidad no es justo y afecta especialmente a familias trabajadoras. El sello de bilingüismo es una forma de valorar lo que nuestros niños ya saben y pueden hacer.

Les pido respetuosamente que apoyen la ley HB-1028 y ayuden a crear un sistema educativo más justo e inclusivo para todos.

Gracias por su tiempo y por escuchar la voz de nuestra comunidad.

Atentamente,

Nancy Rodríguez

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Nancy Rodríguez, and I am writing to express my support for HB-1028. I strongly believe that bilingual children deserve to have their skills recognized without requiring families to pay for additional classes to earn a seal on their certificates.

Many children are already bilingual through their homes, culture, and daily experiences. Creating financial barriers to recognize this ability is unfair and especially impacts working families. The Seal of Biliteracy is a meaningful way to honor what students already know and bring to our communities.

I respectfully ask you to support HB-1028 and help build a more fair and inclusive education system for all students.

Thank you for your time and for listening to our community.

Sincerely,

Nancy Rodríguez

Statement for Biliteracy Legislation
Alana Valladares

Good afternoon, and thank you for the opportunity to speak today. My name is Alana Valladares, a freshman at the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque, and I am here in support of amending the current Seal of Biliteracy because it strengthens equity, access, and recognition for multilingual students across our state.

Adding a Seal of Bilingualism alongside the Seal of Biliteracy would allow more students to be formally recognized for meaningful language achievement and progress. Not all students have access to immersion or dual-immersion programs like I did. Many heritage speakers and independent learners develop strong oral language skills but have fewer structured opportunities to build reading and writing proficiency at the same pace. Their bilingual ability is real and academically valuable, yet under the current system it often goes unrecognized. This additional endorsement would acknowledge students who are actively developing toward full biliteracy and would encourage continued language growth rather than excluding them from recognition altogether.

The bill also addresses an important barrier in the current process: overreliance on a single standardized test. I am fully biliterate, but I struggle with testing anxiety. While I have an IEP that supported me in other assessment settings, there was no accessible alternative pathway for demonstrating my proficiency for the Seal of Biliteracy. As a result, the process of being recognized for skills I use every day was unnecessarily stressful and difficult. I also know that some schools in New Mexico have successfully used alternative evaluation methods, such as portfolio-based assessments and performance tasks, to measure language proficiency with strong academic rigor. For example, one of my friends was required to complete a formal presentation to demonstrate speaking proficiency as part of their evaluation. Allowing students to demonstrate proficiency through a rigorous body of evidence—such as coursework, portfolios, and performance-based measures—preserves high standards while creating a more accurate and fair evaluation of language ability..

Beyond the inherent recognition that the Seal of Biliteracy represents, regarding my academic accomplishment in not just one language but both English and Spanish, the seal of biliteracy was one of the ways in which I stood out as a competitive college applicant. I also anticipate that my contributions to society, post-college graduation will have a farther reach because my work in anthropology will span multiple cultures and languages.

Finally, the option for districts to partner with qualified outside entities ensures that students in rural or under-resourced areas still have access to a consistent and credible pathway

to earn these seals. This promotes statewide equity while maintaining clear and rigorous educational expectations.

Overall, this bill preserves rigorous standards while expanding fair and meaningful recognition for multilingual students. It aligns policy with the realities of how language proficiency is actually developed—through sustained study, lived experience, and demonstrated performance—and not solely through a single testing moment. By opening equitable and consistent pathways to recognition, it ensures that students' hard-earned multilingual abilities are seen, validated, and encouraged. Passing this bill affirms that language skills are not just academic achievements, but assets to our communities, our workforce, and our shared future. Thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration.