

**STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
SYNOPSIS AGENDA/EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

CODE:	<u>EP-01</u>
COMMITTEE:	<u>EP</u>
DATE:	<u>September 2, 2025</u>

SUBJECT/TITLE

Approval of Certification Endorsements in Dual Language Immersion (DLI)

PURPOSE OF REPORT/REGULATION/ITEM

Regulation 43-62 Areas of Certification was amended effective May 19, 2017, giving the State Board of Education, (SBE) authority to approve specialized certification endorsements that may be added to a valid educator certificate. The South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) seeks approval of three specialized endorsements designed for educators and leaders supporting DLI programs in the state.

CRITICAL FACTS

In addition to adding full certification fields to an existing educator certificate, an individual may add endorsements in specialized areas to recognize additional expertise. In some instances, an endorsement may be required to teach specific courses. In other instances, the endorsement represents additional training and study to enhance an educator's professional practice. To add an endorsement, an educator must complete the specific course requirements approved by the State Board. Once approved by the State Board, these requirements will be published in the *Guidelines and Requirements for Adding Certification Fields and Endorsements*.

South Carolina has nine districts and two charter schools that offer immersion education. These programs begin at the elementary level and continue through high school. Within these eleven local education agencies (LEAs), there are 25 elementary schools, 18 middle schools, and 11 high schools that provide an immersion track for students. Currently, there are 281 educators teaching in K-12 immersion programs, with 221 of them focusing on K-5 education, delivering core content (math, science, literacy) in the target language. The languages offered in these programs are Chinese, French, German, and Spanish.

DLI teachers require specific pedagogical skills and knowledge to deliver core content in the target language. They require unique skillsets beyond traditional teaching, including the ability to:

- implement second language acquisition strategies into core classroom instruction,
- teach academic content in a way that is comprehensible to their learners,
- build the student's metalinguistic awareness and transfer skills,

- work closely with English Language Arts (ELA) partner teacher ensuring curriculum alignment and consistency,
- integrate core content standards and world language standards effectively to foster the students' biliteracy skills, and
- design and develop instructional materials and classroom spaces that support both core content and world language standards.

Currently, the SCDE requires an immersion teacher to be (1) certified in the subject field (Early Childhood or Elementary) and have earned a passing score on the certification exam in the target language or (2) to be certified in the target language and have a passing score on the content exam for Elementary or Early Childhood. Meeting the certification field requirements or having a passing score in the subject area does not address the unique skillsets needed to effectively teach DLI.

In March 2025, the Education Associate for World Languages conducted a survey to collect insights on the training and classroom experience of immersion teachers and administrators. The findings show that fewer than 1% of our K-12 immersion educators have some education and training in immersion education. Furthermore, 45% of K-5 and 52% of 6-8 immersion teachers have been in the classroom for less than 5 years. Lastly, only 52% of administrators and coaches overseeing an immersion program have some education and training in leading a dual language program in their school or district.

Given the need to enhance the skillset of teachers and leaders working in immersion programs, the SCDE Office of Assessment and Standards and the Office of Educator Services seek approval of the three endorsements presented below, each uniquely tailored to support teachers, coaches, and instructional leaders. While the three endorsement pathways may share a course or two, none serves as a pre-requisite for another. Each pathway functions independently, tailored to the unique perspectives, experiences and needs of teachers, coaches and instructional leaders. Participants may choose to complete one or more endorsements, depending on their professional goals.

The proposed courses for each endorsement have been selected after extensive research on the current endorsement pathways offered in other states, on-going feedback received from LEA administrators working with DLI programs, and conversations with national DLI experts.

DLI Teacher Endorsement (6 semester hours)

- Foundations of DLI (3 semester hours)
- DLI Methods: Key Practices in Content-Based Language Instruction (3 semester hours)

DLI Coach Endorsement (9 semester hours)

- Foundations of DLI (3 semester hours)
- Principles of DLI Mentors and Evaluation (3 semester hours)

- Instructional Leadership and Coaching in DLI Instruction (3 semester hours)

DLI Instructional Leader Endorsement (12 semester hours)

Participants will be required to take the following two courses:

- Foundations of DLI (3 semester hours)
- Instructional Leadership and Coaching in DLI Instruction (3 semester hours)

Participants will be required to take two elective courses (6 semester hours) and may choose from the courses below:

- Program Evaluation and Improvement in DLI (3 semester hours)
- Systems Alignment and Integration of DLI program (3 semester hours)
- Developing and Sustaining an Effective DLI Program (3 semester hours)

If approved, the DLI endorsements and requirements to earn each endorsement will be added to the *Guidelines and Requirements for Adding Certification and Endorsements*. Educators who successfully complete the required coursework with a grade of C or better through a college or university meeting State Board accreditation requirements may apply to add the endorsement to their educator certificate.

An educator may meet the coursework requirements indicated above and earn the respective endorsement in DLI by successfully completing a comprehensive, extended sequence of professional development opportunities approved by the SCDE.

Teachers, coaches and instructional leaders seeking to earn an endorsement have multiple options to complete the required coursework. They may enroll in online courses offered by colleges and universities nationwide or fulfill the course requirements through the partnership provided by the Office of Assessment and Standards, VirtualSC, and the College of Charleston.

TIMELINE/REVIEW PROCESS

2022-2024	The SCDE Education Associate for World Languages gathered data and met periodically with immersion lead contacts across the state to understand the strengths and needs of the current DLI programs.
July 2024	The SCDE convenes DLI specialists with the purpose of developing specialized endorsement pathways for South Carolina Educators.
August 2024– February 2025	SCDE staff conduct extensive research on existing DLI endorsement programs across the nation and develops, in partnership with a DLI expert, a pathway of coursework for South Carolina teachers, coaches and administrators.

March 2025	SCDE staff submit the endorsement options for review by the Office of Assessment and Standards and Office of Educator Services.
Spring 2025	SCDE staff consult with the Office of Professional Development in Education at the College of Charleston in partnership with VirtualSC Professional Development to explore the development of courses that may be offered through the existing partnership.
Summer 2025	The SCDE VirtualSC team leader, curriculum coordinator, and instructor begin course development and implementation timeline. The SCDE Education Associate for World Languages collects letters of support for the three endorsement pathways from stakeholders.
September 2, 2025	SCDE staff present the three DLI endorsements for State Board approval.

ECONOMIC IMPACT

COST: N/A

FUND/SOURCE: N/A

ATTACHMENTS

Attachments: ☒ yes ☐ no
(attachments must be submitted with synopsis)

Name of Attachments:

1. Certification Endorsements in DLI
2. Program and Course Offerings in DLI
3. Proposed DLI Course Development Timeline
4. Letters of Support for DLI Endorsements

RECOMMENDATION

The SCDE recommends that the SBE approve the specialized certification endorsements for DLI Teacher, Coach, and Instructional Leader.

ACTION REQUEST

FOR APPROVAL:

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FOR INFORMATION ONLY:

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