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WASHINGTON, D.C. 20548

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B-164031(1)

MAY 21 1974

The Honorable Alan Cranston  
United States Senate

Dear Senator Cranston:

In accordance with your joint request with Senator Edward M. Kennedy, dated February 15, 1974, we are providing you with our preliminary observations and conclusions relating to your questions on the need for additional bilingual education teachers and the availability of training programs to prepare them for classroom service.

This report is based on information obtained thus far as part of our ongoing review of the bilingual education program authorized by title VII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (20 U.S.C. 880b). This program, which is administered by the Office of Education (OE), Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, provides funds to local educational agencies to develop and carry out demonstration bilingual and bicultural programs. The programs are to be designed to meet the special educational needs of children ages 3 to 18 who come from low-income families and environments where the dominant language is other than English.

You also requested information on aides, administrators, and counselors in bilingual education, but because our preliminary work did not emphasize these areas, we are limiting our discussion principally to bilingual education teachers. Our work, as it relates to your specific areas of interest, was done primarily at OE headquarters.

NEED FOR AND AVAILABILITY OF  
QUALIFIED BILINGUAL TEACHERS

Although educators and OE officials agree that a need exists for additional qualified bilingual education teachers, OE has not accurately identified the extent of the need. Further, available studies indicate that many teachers in bilingual education programs need additional training.

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Need for additional teachers

One of the most significant factors affecting estimates of the need for bilingual education teachers is the size of the target population. OE has not made an accurate and comprehensive study of the target population. In recent years, estimates of the number of children requiring bilingual education have ranged from 1.8 million to 7 million, and the corresponding estimated need for teachers on a nationwide basis has varied accordingly. The reasons for such wide variances include differences in the scope of the studies that have been made and in underlying assumptions, such as student-teacher ratios.

According to OE regulations, to become effective in June 1974, "children of limited English-speaking ability" are children who come from environments where the dominant language is other than English. The regulations define dominant language as that which is most relied upon for communication in the home. In assessing the size of the target population, however, a commonly used measure of language dominance has been surnames which, according to OE, are not an accurate measure.

In March 1974 testimony before the General Subcommittee on Education, House Committee on Education and Labor, the Under Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare estimated "the outer bounds of the target population to be on the order of 5 million." This estimate was based on a combination of 1970 census data on homes where other than English was spoken and on the Department's Office for Civil Rights 1972 survey of the traditional national ethnic origin minorities--Asian American, Spanish-surnamed, and Native American.

The Under Secretary said that a number of the 5 million children speak English and that on the basis of a sample inquiry among the States,<sup>1</sup> about 1.8 million to 2.5 million children actually need bilingual education. Assuming a classroom student-teacher ratio of 30 to 1, one of the ratios OE used in studying this matter, the estimated number of bilingual education teachers needed would range from 60,000 to 83,333.

According to data compiled by OE's Division of Bilingual Education, as of August 1973 there was a shortage of bilingual education teachers. The data, which covers Spanish-American

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<sup>1</sup>Limited to four States, according to a Department official.

children only, indicates that 8 percent of the teacher need has been met in the six States with the highest concentrations of such children, as shown below.

	<u>Number of Spanish- American students</u>	<u>Number of teachers needed, assuming 30 students per class</u>	<u>Number of teachers trained as of school year 1972-73</u>	<u>Percent of need met</u>
California	706,933	23,564	1,200	5
Texas	565,718	18,857	1,536	8
New York	316,590	10,553	1,200	11
New Mexico	109,315	3,643	640	18
Arizona	85,517	2,850	130	5
Illinois	<u>78,088</u>	<u>2,602</u>	<u>145</u>	<u>6</u>
Total	<u>1,862,161</u>	<u>62,069</u>	<u>4,851</u>	<u>8</u>

The number of students is based on racial and ethnic group enrollment data published in the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare's 1970 Directory of Public Elementary and Secondary Schools in Selected Districts. The enrollment data was collected on the basis of Spanish surname, which as stated earlier, does not accurately measure language dominance.

Availability of teachers

In fiscal year 1973 OE's bilingual education program served about 129,000 English and non-English dominant students in 209 projects. Although 24 languages were represented, the majority of the projects were for Spanish-speaking students and directed at students in kindergarten through grade six. OE estimated that about 3,700 teachers and 2,600 teacher aides served these students. Although overall data on teachers' language and teaching capability is not available, some studies of limited scope have been made which show that generally the teachers need additional training.

For example, an OE-financed study dated December 1973, which examined 34 Spanish projects funded under the bilingual education program, concluded that:

"All teachers employed in the \* \* \* projects were certified. However, not all these teachers were qualified to teach in a bilingual education program. Consequently, there is a lack of formally trained and bilingually qualified teachers to instruct in bilingual education programs. The lack is impacting on \* \* \* project success."

Of the 570 teachers in the 34 projects, the school systems considered about 370 or 73 percent to be qualified to teach language arts, history, science, and math in Spanish. Of the 410 aides in the projects, 219 or 53 percent were deemed capable of participating in the major subject matter instruction in Spanish. About 45 percent of the instructional staff members canvassed believed that their orientation training had been inadequate, but the study did not specifically elaborate on the training deficiencies. However, the education administrators most frequently mentioned culture of the target population, second language instruction, and teaching concepts and methods as essential components of teacher training.

The Bilingual Leadership Training Institute of the California State University at Los Angeles sent questionnaires to all projects funded in fiscal year 1973 under the bilingual education program. The results showed that, of the 2,772 teachers in the 106 projects responding, 1,951 or 70 percent were bilingual and 2,354 or 85 percent needed inservice bilingual and bicultural training.

#### AVAILABILITY OF TRAINING PROGRAMS

Federal support for training bilingual educational personnel is specifically provided for by several legislative authorities, the most significant of which is title VII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. The Education Professions Development Act (20 U.S.C. 1091) enacted June 29, 1967, and the Emergency School Aid Act (20 U.S.C. 1601) enacted June 23, 1972, also authorize teacher training. In addition, bilingual education teacher training is offered to some extent through programs which indirectly address the problem of providing education to children of limited English-speaking ability. Two such programs are Follow Through--a program designed to augment in the early primary grades the gains that poor children have made in Head Start or similar preschool programs--and title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act--a program of aid for educationally deprived children from low-income families.

It is difficult to measure the progress several Federal programs have made in increasing the number of qualified bilingual education teachers because (1) sufficient information is not readily available on the extent and nature of the training provided and (2) OE does not have comprehensive information on bilingual education teacher certification standards that exist either at the State level or at individual local educational agencies. OE officials told us that most States and local educational agencies have not established standards.

Title VII of the Elementary and  
Secondary Education Act

Under title VII, OE is authorized to make grants to local educational agencies and to institutions of higher education applying jointly with one or more such agencies. Grant funds may be used for providing (1) preservice training to prepare persons to participate in bilingual education programs as teachers, teacher aides, or other ancillary educational personnel, such as counselors, and (2) inservice training and development programs to enable these persons to continue to improve their qualifications while participating in such programs.

Preservice training generally involves a basic orientation concerning program goals and approach and is usually offered immediately before the beginning of the school year. Inservice training is given at various times throughout the school year and includes instruction in the methods of teaching certain subjects and the use of teaching materials.

According to OE, the estimated funds spent for training and the number of teachers and teacher aides receiving training are as follows:

<u>Fiscal</u> <u>year</u>	<u>Funds spent</u>  (millions)	<u>Receiving training</u>	
		<u>Teachers</u>	<u>Teacher aides</u>
1972	\$5.1	3,692	2,592
1973	5.3	3,700	2,600
1974	9.0	6,466	4,311

An OE official told us that, although some information on the type of training provided is contained in the project proposals, a compendium of such information has not been prepared.

For fiscal year 1975 the Administration has requested \$35 million for the bilingual education program. However in his March 1974 testimony before the House General Subcommittee on Education, the Under Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare said the Department would seek a budget amendment to its fiscal year 1975 budget submission for an increase of \$35 million for the program. He said that this increase would permit more funds to be allocated for teacher training, among other things.

The extent and nature of the training provided by bilingual education projects vary greatly, according to a 1973 OE-financed study. The study report stated that:

"Training plans vary widely. For example, we found one project that reported sending their entire staff to study bilingual education teaching strategies during five weeks' stay in Mexico for the last two summers. Other staff training plans and supplementary workshops offered a wide diversity of course content and programs, some of which involved BL/BC [bilingual and bicultural] education staff members with local universities. In many cases, however, these did not specifically relate to BL/BC education."

#### Emergency School Aid Act

This act--which expires on June 30, 1974--authorizes OE to financially assist local educational agencies and public and private nonprofit organizations to meet the special needs incident to the desegregation of elementary and secondary schools. The act specifies that not less than 4 percent of the funds appropriated be used to meet the needs of minority group children who are from an environment in which the dominant language is other than English.

For fiscal year 1973, 40 bilingual projects were funded for a total of \$8.9 million, and for fiscal year 1974, \$9.9 million has been set aside. For fiscal year 1975 the Administration has requested \$75 million for planned substitute legislation for the Emergency School Aid Act. Information on the extent and type of training provided to teachers in the projects is not readily available, according to an OE headquarters official, because the program's administration is decentralized.

#### Education Professions Development Act

This act is to improve the quality of teaching and to help meet critical shortages of adequately trained educational personnel. Under part C of the act, OE is authorized to make grants to institutions of higher learning for awarding fellowships for graduate study in the field of education administration and other educational careers. In fiscal year 1973 five institutions received grants totaling \$617,100 for awarding 66 fellowships to prepare bilingual and bicultural administrators for schools or school systems with a large population of bilingual and bicultural children. An OE official told us, however, that the training the individuals received did not necessarily prepare them to administer bilingual education programs. She also said that in fiscal year 1974 no funds were set aside for part C, and for fiscal year 1975 the Administration did not request any funds.

Under part D of the act, OE is authorized to make grants to or contracts with institutions of higher education and State and local educational agencies for establishing programs and projects to train or retrain persons in special educational programs for children of limited English-speaking ability. According to OE, the program's accomplishments are as follows:

<u>Fiscal year</u>	<u>Funding</u>	<u>Projects</u>	<u>Participants</u>
1971	\$ 919,400	12	510
1972	806,927	12	510
1973	1,386,590	13	600
1974	2,433,000 (estimated)	-	-

An OE official told us that, before fiscal year 1974, program funds were used to train bilingual education teachers, administrators, and counselors, but fiscal year 1974 funds were to be used only to train bilingual education teachers and teacher trainers. For fiscal year 1975 the Administration did not request any funds.

COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES'  
TRAINING PROGRAMS

OE officials we have contacted believe that not many colleges and universities are capable of training bilingual education teachers. OE has not comprehensively assessed this capability, and information that has been developed is insufficient. For example, in an OE-financed survey a questionnaire was sent to nine State educational agencies asking them to identify college and university programs in their States designated as "bilingual education." Below are the results of the questionnaire dated February 1973.

<u>Colleges and universities</u>	<u>Program description provided</u>
3	Courses in bilingualism
1	Graduate major in bilingualism
1	Graduate Chicano caucus courses in sociology
1	Composite major along with elementary education
3	Teacher training programs specializing in bilingual education
2	Masters degree and undergraduate minors in bilingual education
32	Courses in English as a second language
11	Courses in bilingual education

Colleges and universities

Program description provided

23	Puerto Rican studies
1	Undergraduate and masters degrees in bilingual education
6	Undergraduate programs for bilingual education on a pilot basis
1	Bilingual education teacher training programs for elementary teachers

Ten other colleges said they were planning to develop a bilingual education program.

The project director who conducted the survey told us that he had requested descriptive abstracts of the programs but in most cases the State educational agencies did not provide them. Additionally, OE officials believe that many colleges and universities--to increase the possibility of receiving Federal funding--tend to inflate their capabilities to provide training in the field of bilingual education.

CONCLUSIONS

We cannot accurately assess the availability of and additional need for qualified bilingual education teachers or the capability of colleges and universities to prepare them for classroom service because of the lack of data on (1) the target population to be served through bilingual education, (2) the extent and nature of the training provided bilingual education teachers, and (3) training programs of colleges and universities.

Available evidence suggests that additional qualified teachers are needed and that many, already participating, need additional training. Additionally, Federal programs' accomplishments in preparing individuals to teach or serve in some other capacity in a bilingual environment appear to be insufficient when considering apparent needs. On the basis of our discussions with OE officials, it appears that not many colleges and universities are capable of preparing individuals for classroom service in the field of bilingual education.

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We are sending an identical report to Senator Edward M. Kennedy. We discussed this report informally with OE officials and considered their comments. We do not plan to

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distribute this report further unless you agree or publicly  
announce its contents.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "R. F. Keller".

Acting Comptroller General  
of the United States