



California Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages

A PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THOSE CONCERNED WITH TEACHING OF ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE OR DIALECT AND BILINGUAL EDUCATION
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April 21, 2011

Hon. Julia Brownley
State Assembly
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

AB 815: SUPPORT
Assembly Education Committee
April 27, 2011

Dear Assembly Member Brownley:

CATESOL has reviewed your AB 815 and has taken a position of support for this very important bill. CATESOL is a statewide organization that promotes professional competency and standards for teaching English to speakers of other languages. The organization also works to represent the needs of students and teachers.

AB 815 would establish the Seal of Biliteracy which would recognize high school graduates who have attained a high level of proficiency in one or more languages in addition to English. This recognition would be in the form of a state insignia that can be affixed to either the high school diploma or the transcript of high school graduates. This action could take place with no cost and would result in significant value to students, businesses and the State's economy in the future.

CATESOL supports AB 815 because it would establish a sorely needed and significant public policy of acquiring world languages (in addition to English) as critical 21st Century skills. Our students would receive the message that biliteracy is not only valued by the business sector but also valued by our educational system. Acquiring a world language is a skill highly regarded by the businesses and leads directly to jobs. Our educational system needs to focus attention on this reality.

Studies also reveal that acquiring a second language is linked with enhanced cognitive development, higher-order thinking, and creativity. Research also shows that students who study a world language score higher in both the math and verbal portions of the ACT than their counterparts who do not, and that students across all socioeconomic levels who take a world language perform better on the verbal section of the SAT, with more years of world language study associated with higher scores.

Again, CATESOL supports AB 815. If we can be of further assistance on this bill please contact me at (916) 447-8420.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey Frost
CATESOL Legislative Advocate

cc: Assembly Education Committee members
State Conference in Long Beach, April 14-16, 2011
<http://www.catesol2011.org>



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