



World Language Summit: Seal of Biliteracy & Competency-Based Credits

Saturday, January 23, 2016
University of Washington Mary Gates Hall



What is the Seal of Biliteracy?

The Seal of Biliteracy is an award made by the state to **recognize a student who has attained proficiency in both English and one or more other world languages by high school graduation.**

The Seal of Biliteracy takes the form of a seal on the diploma and a notation that appears on the transcript of the graduating senior. It is a statement of accomplishment that helps to signal evidence of a student's readiness for career and college, and to engage as a global citizen.



Brief National History of the Seal of Biliteracy

- California, passed 2011
- New York, passed in 2012
- Illinois and Texas, passed in 2013
- Louisiana, Minnesota, New Mexico, Rhode Island, Washington, passed in 2014
- Oregon piloting in some districts
- National Guidelines released March 2015
- Utah plans for Gold Seal (Intermediate Mid) and Platinum Seal (Advanced)
- New Jersey passed in January 2016



Passing the WA State Seal of Biliteracy legislation OneAmerica

Organizing Power: Community base groups across Washington State developing development



Policy Advocacy: Local, state, and federal policy change to improve opportunities for immigrants



SENATE BILL 6424

“[T]he legislature's intent is to promote and recognize linguistic proficiency and cultural literacy in one or more world languages in addition to English through the establishment of a **Washington state seal of biliteracy.**”

- Passed by the Senate March 10, 2014: YEAS 49 NAYS 0
- Passed by the House March 6, 2014: YEAS 69 NAYS 27
- Signed by the Governor March 27, 2014



State Seal of Biliteracy SB Bill 6424
Signing on March 27, 2014

Photo courtesy of Washington State Legislative Support Service

Provisions

“Participating school districts shall place a notation on a student’s high school diploma and high school transcript indicating that the student has earned the seal.”



7

Criteria

“The office of the superintendent of public instruction shall **adopt rules establishing criteria for award** of the Washington state seal of biliteracy. The criteria must require a student to **demonstrate proficiency in English** by meeting state high school graduation requirements in English, including through state assessments and credits, and **proficiency in one or more world languages other than English**. The criteria must permit a student to demonstrate proficiency in another world language through **multiple methods** including nationally or internationally recognized language proficiency tests and **competency-based world language credits** awarded under the model policy adopted by the Washington state school directors’ association.”



8

Concerns about Equity

“For the purposes of this section, a world language other than English must include American sign language and Native American languages.”



9

Languages of Students in Transitional Bilingual Programs

“By December 1, 2017, the office of the superintendent of public instruction shall submit a report to the education committees of the legislature that compares the number of students awarded the Washington state seal of biliteracy in the previous two school years and the languages spoken by those students, to the number of students enrolled or previously enrolled in the transitional bilingual instruction program and the languages spoken by those students.”



10

Increasing the Methods for Demonstrating Proficiency

“The office of the superintendent of public instruction shall also **report the methods used** by students to demonstrate proficiency for the Washington state seal of biliteracy, and describe how the office of the superintendent of public instruction plans to **increase the number of possible methods** for students to demonstrate proficiency, **particularly in world languages that are not widely spoken.**”



11

Criteria Established by OSPI

- Proficiency in English
- Proficiency in a world language other than English
 - Passing AP Exam (3 or higher)
 - Passing IB Exam (SL or HL 4 or higher)
 - Demonstrating Intermediate Mid (or higher) using assessments provided by OSPI
 - Earning 4 Competency-Based Credits (Intermediate Mid or higher on OSPI approved assessments)
 - Demonstrating proficiency comparable to Intermediate Mid on OSPI approved national/international tests

[WAC 392-415-070](#) Mandatory high school transcript contents
[WAC 392-410-350](#) Seal of Biliteracy



12

Highline Public Schools Awards the Seal of Biliteracy

- 193 Seal of Biliteracy recipients in 23 languages in Spring 2015
- How students were identified:
 - Report in student database system
 - Verify with AP / IB coordinators students who received 3 and 4 or higher on language test
 - Verify with all H.S. counselors for meeting ELA requirements
- Recognition at graduation, School Board meeting, school assemblies
- Medallions at graduation, certificates, seal foil
- Next steps/ideas – Bilingual teacher pipeline, starting with Seal of Biliteracy recipients



Process for World Language Credit by Proficiency [Highline SD]

- Year-long testing window schedule for all high schools
 - High schools identify WLCbyP site coordinator
 - Schools promote opportunity via flyers, PPT, video
 - Students pre-register at school
 - 1st meeting – WLCbyP overview, writing sample, self assessment
 - 2nd meeting – permission form, sample test, details about proficiency levels and Seal, students commit to test
 - 3rd meeting – test day
 - 6-8 weeks, results and letter sent to schools (principal, counselor, registrar, student)
- Blue = central office supported
Red = school site supported



Getting the Word Out!

[Highline SD]

- Explanation and promotion of the Seal with WL teachers and School Counselors (survey)
- PPT with information about WLCbyP and Seal and video to be used in H.S. advisory classes and Open Houses
- Explanation of Seal at every WLCbyP meeting at all high schools
- WL teachers talk with students about ACTFL proficiency scale and Seal of Biliteracy



Challenges and Next Steps

[Highline SD]

- Graduating seniors taking AP or IB test, results back in summer (43 in 2015)
- Messaging about the Seal with ELL Lead teachers and College and Career Access Specialists
- Posters about the Seal and WLCbyP and benefits for counseling offices



Seattle SD Recognizes 195 students in June 2015

- 84 for AP (level 3+) Chinese, French, Japanese, Spanish
- 52 for IB (level 4+) French, Japanese, Spanish
- 59 for 4 Competency-Based Credits in Amharic, Dutch, German, Mandarin, Oromo, Persian, Punjabi, Somali, Spanish, Swahili, Tagalog, Thai, Tigrinya, Vietnamese
- How?
 - Letters with assessment results
 - Seal stickers (for diplomas)
 - Medallions to wear at graduation



What the Seal means to students, especially ELLs



"I am extremely excited because I have never gotten the chance to put my language to use at school or to something that will benefit me in the future."

"Having an opportunity where cultural skills learned outside of school are recognized is fantastic!"



Video about Competency-Based Credits & the Seal



<https://youtu.be/tgCMhiM1N-o>

<http://www.k12.wa.us/WorldLanguages/CompetencyBasedCredits.aspx>



19

Education NW Reports

- The Impact of the Road Map World Language Credit Program on Student Attitudes Toward Bilingualism and School (Oct 2014)
- The Impact of Competency-Based World Language Credits on Graduation (June 2015)

<http://www.k12.wa.us/worldlanguages/RoadMap/default.aspx>



20

What World Language Teachers Can Do

- Make sure your AP and IB students know about the Seal of Biliteracy. (Students who pass AP/IB exams in spring of 12th grade can still receive the Seal after graduation.)
- Encourage students who have a first language other than English (or the language you teach) to earn credits in their home language too and earn the Seal for that language.
- For students who speak a language, but lack literacy skills, help them find a way to learn to read and write in their home language and earn credits and the Seal.



21

For more information, visit:

<http://www.k12.wa.us/WorldLanguages/SealofBiliteracy.aspx>



22