



SPS Adopts Seal of Biliteracy Recognizing Students Proficient in Two or More Languages

Seal Displayed on Transcripts and Diplomas of Those with Mastery in English and Another Language

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MEDIA CONTACT:

**Sharon Beadle
203-977-4095
sbeadle@stamfordct.gov**

Stamford, Conn.—**Stamford Public Schools (SPS) Superintendent Earl Kim** announced today that SPS will recognize students who have studied and attained proficiency in English and another language at the time of graduation will be awarded a Seal of Biliteracy on their transcripts and diplomas. The seal recognizes the value of students’ academic efforts, the tangible benefits of being bilingual and biliterate, and prepares students to be productive contributing members of our global society. The Seal of Biliteracy was signed into law by the Governor of the State of Connecticut in June 2016. Connecticut is among only 27 states to adapt this designation.

The Seal of Biliteracy will be awarded to eligible students from any of our three high schools, **the Academy of Information Technology & Engineering, Stamford High School and Westhill High School**, including the **Alternate Routes to Success (ARTS)** program, beginning this year.

“We are very excited that our students will have the opportunity to earn the Seal of Biliteracy,” said Assistant Superintendent-Secondary Michael Fernandes. “The Seal denotes that SPS recognizes the value locally and globally of being bilingual in our multicultural and multilingual society. Those who earn the Seal will walk with a special distinction at graduation.”

An SPS student will be eligible for a Seal of Biliteracy if that student successfully meets the English, Reading and Writing Performance Standards for SPS graduation requirements and successfully complete one the following pathways:

1. Juniors in SPS World Language courses who scored a 3 or higher on that AP exam.
2. Seniors in SPS World Language:
 - a. who score an I-3 (Intermediate level 3) or higher in all four domains of the Assessment of Performance toward Proficient in Language (AAPPL) and receive an official passing notification prior to the Tuesday following Memorial Day
 - b. who are enrolled in AP coursework will not be able to demonstrate passing score prior to graduation. There is an option of taking the AAPPL in the language of instruction.
3. Heritage Speakers, a speaker of any language other than English, who is seeking designation in a language not offered at SPS, but who can prove proficiency by meeting the minimum identified score on one of a number of offered assessments.

There are more than 67 languages spoken in the homes of our students and 14% are English Learners, highlighting the importance of helping our students develop and maintain multiple languages.

“Whether a student is an English learner who becomes proficient in English while maintaining his/her first language or a native English speaking student who becomes proficient in an additional language, bilingualism is something Stamford Public Schools wants to promote, recognize and celebrate,” said Fernandes.

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[Stamford Public Schools \(SPS\)](#) comprises nearly 16,000 students, over 1,500 professionals, and 21 schools, including seven magnet schools and three International Baccalaureate sites. SPS has a total of 13 elementary schools, five middle schools and three high schools. The mission of the Stamford Public Schools is to provide an education that cultivates productive habits of mind, body and heart in every student.

SPS is proud that our district is as rich in diversity as it is in talent. We have students from many cultural backgrounds and geographic locations—as demonstrated by the more than 65 different languages spoken in the homes of our families. SPS offers our students a learning experience rich in cultural diversity and reflective of the global society in which they will work and live.