



THE SEAL OF BILITERACY FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. What is the Seal of Biliteracy?

The Seal of Biliteracy is an award from the Iowa State Board of Education that recognizes a student's high level of proficiency in speaking, reading and writing in English and one or more languages.

Governor Kim Reynolds signed SF475 into law during the 2018 legislative session. The language of the bill is as follows:

Sec. 17. Section 256.9, Code 2017, is amended by adding the following new subsection:
Develop and administer a seal of biliteracy program to recognize students graduating from high school who have demonstrated proficiency in two or more world languages, one of which must be English. Participation in the program by a school district, attendance center, or accredited nonpublic school shall be voluntary. The department shall work with stakeholders to identify standardized tests that may be used to demonstrate proficiency. The department shall produce a seal of biliteracy, which may include but need not be limited to a sticker that may be affixed to a student's high school transcript or a certificate that may be awarded to the student. A participating school district or school shall notify the department of the names of the students who have qualified for the seal and the department shall provide the school district or school with the appropriate number of seals or other authorized endorsement. The department may charge a nominal fee to cover printing and postage charges related to issuance of the biliteracy seal under this subsection.

2. What is proficiency?

Proficiency is the ability to function in a language at a high degree of competence.

3. What is the purpose of the Seal of Biliteracy?

High School graduates who can function in two or more languages are equipped with the knowledge and skills to participate successfully in college, careers, and a diverse 21st century society. The purpose is to:

- Recognize the value of language learning in public schools
- Encourage students to attain high proficiency levels in one or languages in addition to English
- Affirm native or heritage languages



- Provide employers with a method of identifying individuals with languages and biliteracy skills
- Prepare students with the critical skills necessary to function in a global society
- Strengthen cross-cultural communication, affirm the value of diversity, and honor the multiple cultures and languages in our communities.

4. What are the requirements for a Seal of Biliteracy?

To receive the Iowa Seal of Biliteracy, a student must:

Shall demonstrate proficiency in English and met during the course of each student's high school years.

Exam	Minimum Score
ACT	English 18
AP Language or AP Literature Exam	3
English Language Proficiency Assessment for the 21 st Century (ELPA 21) in grades 9-12	Proficient, Level 3
SAT	English 470
Iowa Statewide Assessment of Student Progress (ISASP) in grades 9-12	Proficient in English/Language Arts
Most recent Iowa Assessment results (2018-2019 only)	Proficient in Reading Comprehension

Assessment	Language(s)	Minimum Score to Qualify for Seal of Biliteracy
Advanced Placement (AP) Language and Culture Exam	Spanish, Chinese, French, German, Italian, Japanese	3
Advanced Placement (AP) Latin Exam	Latin	3
International	Any instruction language in an IB program	Only available to students currently enrolled in



Baccalaureate		IB programs.
ACTFL Assessment of Performance toward Proficiency in Languages (AAPPL) Measure	Arabic, Chinese (Mandarin), French, German, Hindi, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, Thai	Intermediate Two (1-2) The level is required on all four components of the assessment: • Interpretive Listening • Interpretive Reading • Interpersonal Listening and Speaking • Presentational Writing
ACTFL Latin Interpretive Reading Assessment (ALIRA)	Latin	Intermediate Two (1-2)
Standard Based Measurement of Proficiency (STAMP)	Arabic, Chinese, (Simplified and Traditional), French, German, Hebrew, Hindi, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Polish, Russian, Spanish	Intermediate -Mid (5) This level is required on all components
Assessment	Language(s)	Minimum Score to Qualify for the Seal of Biliteracy
National Examination in World Languages	Arabic (MSA), Korean, Portuguese (global), and Russian	Intermediate Mid This level is required on all components.
Diplomas of Spanish as a Foreign Language (DELE)	Spanish	B1 This level is required on all components.
Diplomas of French Language Studies (DELFP)	French	B1 This level is required on all components.



American Sign Language Proficiency Interview (ASLPI)	American Sign Language	3
Sign Language Proficiency Interview (SLPI)	American Sign Language	Intermediate
Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI)	List provide at: https://www.languageTesting.com/oral-proficiency-interview-opi	Intermediate-Mid Must be taken in conjunction with the WPT
Assessment	Language(s)	Minimum Score to Qualify for the Seal of Biliteracy
Oral Proficiency Interview-computer (OPI)	Arabic, Mandarin Chinese, English, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Pashto, Persian Farsi, European Portuguese, Russian and Spanish	Intermediate-Mid Must be taken with the WPT
Assessment	Language(s)	Minimum Score to Qualify for the Seal of Biliteracy
Writing Proficiency Test (WPT)	Albanian (Booklet form only), Arabic, Cantonese Chinese, Mandarin Chinese, English, French, German Greek (Modern), Haitian Creole (Booklet form only), Hebrew (Booklet form only), Hindi, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Persian Farsi, Polish, European Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, Turkish, Vietnamese	Intermediate-Mid Must be taken in conjunction with the OPI/OPIc
World Languages in Which No Assessment	Individually approved by local school district. Products to demonstrate proficiency may include: Formal presentations in the targeted	



Exists	world language; • Student-produced compositions, articles, papers and other formal documents in the targeted world language; and/or • Certificate, transcripts, diplomas, results from tests or assessments other than those identified above and additional achievements that demonstrate sufficient proficiency in the targeted world language.	
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5. Where can I find more information about the Iowa Seal of Biliteracy?

You can find more information at <https://educateiowa.gov/pk-12/instruction/biliteracy-seal>.

6. How do I apply for a Seal of Biliteracy?

- Review the guidelines and requirements for the Seal of Biliteracy.
- Consult with the school counselor at your high school to obtain information about the approved language assessment that would be the most appropriate for you.
- If your score qualifies for a Seal of Biliteracy, complete the Seal of Biliteracy electronic application located at Infinite Campus and upload copies of your approved language assessment. If you are taking the AP or IB exam, still complete the application and submit it without the scores, as those test scores are reported after graduation.

7. What is the cost of the Seal of Biliteracy?

No fee is charged to students to apply for the Seal of Biliteracy. However, students are responsible for any assessment cost not covered by their school or the school district.

8. Does the Seal of Biliteracy apply to American Sign Language (ASL)?

Yes. American Sign Language is recognized as a World Language.

9. Can a student qualify for the Seal of Biliteracy in multiple languages in addition to English?

Yes. The requirements must be met for each language.



10. Students who use AP (Advanced Placement) or IB (International Baccalaureate) exam scores during their senior year to qualify for a Seal of Biliteracy will not receive their results until after graduation. Will they be eligible to receive a seal after graduation?

Yes, the seal may be awarded after graduation. A school may choose to recognize these students as “candidates for the Iowa Seal of Biliteracy” during graduation ceremonies, and/or hold a special ceremony at a later time to honor the Seal of Biliteracy recipients.
(Diplomas will be reprinted to include the Seal of Biliteracy and be available for pick up by student/guardian at their high school)

11. Are students in nonpublic schools in Iowa eligible for a Seal of Biliteracy?

Yes, nonpublic schools will have to apply for the Seal of Biliteracy directly with the Iowa Department of Education.

12. What if a student moves into Iowa in the middle of their senior year and has not yet had the opportunity to take the Iowa Statewide Assessment of Student Progress?

The district will use one of the other recognized assessments or use the statewide assessment recognized in the state they moved from to demonstrate proficiency.

13. Where can I find more information?

Contact your World Language Teacher or School Counselor to find out more information. Or visit the Iowa State Department of Education website: at <https://educateiowa.gov/pk-12/instruction/biliteracy-seal>.