



Blount County Schools Alabama Seal of Biliteracy: Overview and Guidelines

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PART I: ABOUT THE ALABAMA SEAL OF BILITERACY.....	3
Overview.....	3
Purpose.....	3
Criteria.....	3
PART II: LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY REQUIREMENTS.....	4
English Proficiency Assessment Options and Benchmarks.....	4
World Language Proficiency Assessment Options and Benchmarks.....	4
STAMP Assessment Guidelines.....	4
AAPPL Assessment Guidelines.....	5
Numerical Values for Proficiency Ratings.....	5
AAPPL Test Composite Score Numerical Values.....	5
AAPPL Test Composite Scores Calculation Examples.....	5
Portfolio Assessment Process.....	6
Portfolio Rubrics.....	8
a) Interpersonal Listening.....	8
b) Presentational Speaking.....	9
c) Interpersonal Communication.....	10
d) Presentational Reading/Writing.....	11
PART III. Implementation.....	12
Alabama Seal of Biliteracy Committee.....	12
ALSDE Documentation and PowerSchool Reporting.....	12
Student Application Process.....	12
Communication Plan.....	12
Assessment Procurement and Administration.....	12
Annual Program Review.....	13
Student Recognition.....	13
PART V. REFERENCES.....	14
APPENDIX.....	15
A. Student Application.....	15
B. Letter for Student Recognition Sample.....	16

PART I: ABOUT THE ALABAMA SEAL OF BILITERACY

Overview

On April 1, 2022, the State of Alabama signed into law Alabama [Act #2022-200](#), recognizing seniors who have demonstrated English proficiency and intermediate-mid proficiency or better in one other world language, including American Sign Language. This designation, listed on a student's high school transcript, helps employers and universities identify bilingual candidates who possess 21st-century skills and value learning about other languages and cultures. The Alabama Seal of Biliteracy emphasizes the importance of bilingualism for improved communication, economic growth, and cultural understanding to enhance intergroup relationships.

Purpose

The Alabama Seal of Biliteracy is founded on solid research highlighting the benefits of mastering two or more languages. The Alabama Seal recognizes and promotes the value of the nation's linguistic diversity and acknowledges the language skills students gain at home, in their communities, and through various educational experiences. It encourages language learners to maintain and enhance their first or heritage language while achieving proficiency in additional languages.

In summary, the purpose and advantages of the Alabama Seal of Biliteracy include:

- To encourage students to study multiple languages,
- To certify the attainment of biliteracy at a minimum of intermediate-mid level proficiency,
- To provide employers with a way to identify individuals who are proficient in language and biliteracy skills,
- To give institutions of higher education a method to recognize and award academic credit to applicants seeking admission,
- To prepare students with 21st-century skills,
- To promote world language instruction in Alabama schools,
- To strengthen intergroup relationships, affirm the value of diversity, and honor the multiple cultures in a community.

Criteria

To earn the Alabama Seal of Biliteracy, a student must do the following:

1. Complete the Alabama high school graduation requirements.
2. Demonstrate proficiency in one of the approved English language assessment options.
3. Demonstrate proficiency in one of the approved World Languages assessments, or through a Portfolio Assessment when applicable.

PART II: LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY REQUIREMENTS

To earn the Alabama Seal of Biliteracy, students must meet English proficiency benchmarks and score at least intermediate-mid on an approved language assessment.

English Proficiency Assessment Options and Benchmarks

English Proficiency Assessment Options Table	
Test	Minimum Score
ACT® English	18
ACT® Reading	20
Advanced Placement®	3
International Baccalaureate®	5
WIDA ACCESS for ELLs	4.8
AAPPL English	Intermediate Mid 3*

*In each of the four domains

World Language Proficiency Assessment Options and Benchmarks

World Language Proficiency Assessment Options Table	
Test	Minimum Score
Advanced Placement®	3
International Baccalaureate®	4
AAPPL (World Language)	Intermediate Mid 3*
STAMP 4s	Intermediate Mid 5*
CEFR	Level B1
A portfolio assessment may be considered only when no standardized examination exists to assess the target language.	Must have ALSDE pre-approval. Refer to the Portfolio Rubric

*In each of the four domains

Students taking the AP or IB language exams receive a single overall score based on multiple language modalities in all four areas: reading, writing, speaking, and listening, with no separate scores for each skill.

Portfolio Assessment Process

According to ACT #2022-200 (page 4), a portfolio assessment may be considered only when no standardized examination exists to assess the target language. The school district must certify to the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) that the portfolio or examination demonstrates rigor equivalent to the Intermediate Mid level of proficiency, as defined by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL).

The World Language Proficiency Assessment must evaluate listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills at a minimum of the Intermediate Mid-level, or higher. The assessment should be comparable in structure and rigor to the Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) or similar proficiency interviews used by other states for tribal or less commonly taught languages.

If a portfolio pathway is utilized, Blount County Schools will implement the following process to ensure consistency, reliability, and equitable evaluation for all students:

1. Student Notification and Submission Requirements

Students who choose or require the portfolio pathway will be provided written instructions that outline the portfolio components, formatting requirements, deadlines, and the scoring rubric. Students will submit their completed portfolio to their school counselor or EL teacher, who will verify that all required components have been included before forwarding it to the district evaluation team.

2. Verification of Eligibility

Prior to scoring, the District EL Consulting Teacher and school counselor will confirm that the student meets all non-portfolio eligibility requirements (e.g., English proficiency criteria for the Seal of Biliteracy). Only verified portfolios will be sent forward for evaluation.

3. Assignment to Trained Evaluators

Portfolios will be reviewed by at least two trained evaluators, selected from a pool that may include world language teachers, EL teachers, or district instructional personnel. Evaluators will complete annual training on the scoring rubric to ensure consistent application of performance criteria.

4. Independent Scoring Process

Each evaluator will independently score the portfolio using the official district scoring rubric. Evaluators will not consult with each other before scoring to preserve objectivity.

5. Portfolio Requirements

- a. A minimum of two pieces of evidence per domain.
- b. The reflection statement would explain how the portfolio demonstrates proficiency in one paragraph.
- c. Provide a copy of the student's IEP that outlines any testing accommodations, particularly those related to the student's inability to demonstrate proficiency in a specific language domain.

6. Reconciliation of Scores

After scoring, evaluators will compare results.

- If scores align within the acceptable range (e.g., within one performance band), they will be averaged to determine the final score.
- If there is a significant discrepancy, a third evaluator will independently score the portfolio, and the final determination will be based on the two closest scores.

7. Documentation and Recordkeeping

All scoring sheets, evaluator notes, and final score summaries will be submitted to the District EL Coordinator. The district will maintain portfolio documentation according to record retention requirements and ALSDE expectations for verification.

8. Communication of Results

Students and families will receive written notification of the results within a defined timeline. If the student does not meet the required score, the notification will include the option to retest (if permissible) or revise and resubmit the portfolio during the established window.

Portfolio Rubric

Domain	Evidence Examples	1 Emerging Novice Mid–High	2 Developing Intermediate Low	3 Expanding Intermediate Mid Target	4 Bridging Intermediate High or Above	Score /4
Listening Interpretive Comprehension	Audio/video clips, teacher observations, symbol-matching tasks	Understands words or short phrases in familiar contexts; relies on visuals and gestures.	Understands short phrases and simple sentences on familiar topics with support.	Understands main ideas and some details from short, familiar spoken texts; follows multi-step directions.	Understands connected speech and details on familiar topics; infers opinions or main points.	/4
Speaking Interpersonal & Presentational Communication	Oral responses, recorded dialogues, and interviews	Uses memorized words and rehearsed expressions to communicate basic needs.	Produces short phrases or patterned sentences with visual or prompt support.	Uses connected sentences to describe familiar topics and express opinions; asks and answers simple questions.	Sustains conversation with elaboration and organization; communicates in all time frames on familiar topics.	/4
Reading Interpretive Comprehension	Texts, storyboards, picture-symbol activities, short articles	Recognizes familiar words, symbols, or pictures in context.	Reads or interprets short, simple sentences with visual support.	Identifies main ideas and supporting details in short texts; matches written and visual information.	Reads and interprets organized texts independently; compares or synthesizes information across sources.	/4
Writing Presentational Expression	Written work, journals, text	Writes or assembles single words or symbols to convey meaning.	Writes short, simple sentences or patterned phrases with support.	Writes connected sentences about familiar topics with some elaboration; uses basic connectors.	Writes short paragraphs with organization, detail, and emerging control of complex structures.	/4
Reflection Cultural & Personal Growth	Interview, journal, video reflection, presentation	Gives simple statements about preferences or personal experiences.	Describes language or cultural experiences with some detail.	Reflects on growth in language, cultural understanding, or communication strategies.	Connects bilingual skills to goals, community, or cultural identity; demonstrates intercultural competence.	/4

Total Points: ___ / 20

(To meet the Intermediate Mid proficiency requirement, a student must earn at least 15 points overall, on the rubric and receive no lower than a 3 in each domain).

PART III. Implementation

Alabama Seal of Biliteracy Committee

The committee will document responsibilities for each member to ensure coordinated and consistent program oversight.

- The District EL Coordinator will lead the program and ensure compliance with ALSDE requirements.
- The District EL Consulting Teacher and school counselors will jointly review student eligibility and verify documentation.
- The District Assessment Coordinator and Secondary Curriculum Coordinator will manage assessment procurement, scheduling, and administration.
- Members of the District Improvement Team will participate in the annual evaluation of the program to determine effectiveness and equity across all schools.

ALSDE Documentation and PowerSchool Reporting

The district will follow all communication and documentation requirements established by ALSDE. This includes accurate reporting of qualifying students in PowerSchool and maintaining all required records for state verification. The district will also secure and appropriately use the official Alabama Seal of Biliteracy image once approval is granted by ALSDE.

Student Application Process

Blount County Schools will establish and communicate a standardized application process for students seeking the Alabama Seal of Biliteracy. The application clearly outlines eligibility criteria, required documentation, assessment options, and submission timelines. Points of contact will be provided to support students and families throughout the process.

Communication Plan

To ensure broad awareness and encourage student participation, the district will implement a comprehensive communication plan. Information about the Alabama Seal of Biliteracy will be shared through the district website, school counselors, EL and world language teachers, social media platforms, and parent communication systems. This coordinated outreach will ensure that students, families, and stakeholders are fully informed of program requirements and opportunities.

Assessment Procurement and Administration

Only assessments aligned with ALSDE guidance will be used, and all procurement will follow district purchasing policies. The committee will prepare and publish a testing schedule for all participating schools and will identify students requiring accommodations. Collaboration with EL, special education, and 504 coordinators will ensure that accommodations outlined in IEPs, 504 plans, and I-ELPs are fully implemented during testing.

Annual Program Review

The district Alabama Seal of Biliteracy Committee will conduct an annual review of the program. This review will analyze participation rates, assessment outcomes, portfolio results (if applicable), stakeholder input, and student access across schools. Findings will be used to refine pathways, ensure equitable participation, and strengthen preparatory opportunities at earlier grade levels to encourage long-term language development.

Student Recognition

The Alabama Seal of Biliteracy shall be affixed to the student's official high school diploma and recorded on the student's official transcript. Each school may choose its preferred method of recognition—such as senior awards ceremonies, graduation programs, or the presentation of certificates and honor cords.

PART V. REFERENCES

Alabama Seal of Biliteracy Act Number 2022-200. Retrieved 2025, from: [Alabama Seal of Biliteracy Act Number 2022-200](#)

Alabama Seal of Biliteracy. (2025). Alabama Seal of Biliteracy: Overview and Guidelines for Public Schools. In *Alabama Seal of Biliteracy*. [Alabama Seal of Biliteracy: Overview and Guidelines for Public Schools](#)

APPENDIX

A. Student Application



Blount County Schools Student Application for the Alabama Seal of Biliteracy



Directions to Applicants:

1. Complete all sections of the application. Type or print all information legibly.
2. Submit application and documentation of qualifying scores to a high school counselor no later than March 27th, 2026.

Name of Student: _____ Today's Date: _____

Current Grade Level: _____ Expected Year of Graduation: _____

Name of School: _____

Name of School Counselor: _____

Assessment information used to document proficiency in English and a Second Language:

Language	Name of Assessment	Date Completed	Score*
English			
Second Language: _____			

***Attach copy of score report. If the student is to be recognized for additional languages, use the additional form and attach all additional score reports.**

By signing below, I indicate I have provided accurate information and understand that school officials will verify the information before the Seal of Biliteracy is awarded.

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

School Counselor Signature: _____ Date: _____

Please submit all application materials to the Secondary Curriculum Coordinator and the District EL Coordinator by April 6, 2026.

For official use only: Qualifications Checklist for Alabama Seal of Biliteracy

- ☐ Eligible for graduation
- ☐ Acceptable evidence of proficiency in English
- ☐ Acceptable evidence of proficiency in a Second Language
- ☐ If denied, explain: _____

B. Letter for Student Recognition Sample



[Date]

Dear [Student's Name],

Congratulations! You have earned the Alabama Seal of Biliteracy for your proficiency in English and [Target Language].

This honor reflects your commitment to academic excellence and ability to communicate effectively in two languages. On April 1, 2022, the Alabama Legislature passed Act 2022-200, formally establishing the Alabama Seal of Biliteracy. This designation is reserved for students who meet rigorous standards of bilingualism and biliteracy, including high levels of proficiency in English and an additional world language, such as American Sign Language.

Your achievement has been recorded in our records and reported to the Alabama State Department of Education. This distinction will also appear on your official high school transcript.

Please note that this is a rare and prestigious accomplishment. We encourage you to highlight it on college, scholarship, and job applications, as it is a lifelong credential.

You may wish to include the following wording on your résumé or applications: "Recipient of the Alabama Seal of Biliteracy, verifying intermediate-level biliteracy and bilingualism in both English and [Target Language]."

Once again, congratulations on this outstanding achievement. We are proud of your hard work and dedication.

Sincerely,
[Principal's Name]
[School Name]