

What does it mean to be Biliterate? Bilingual?

Biliterate: One is able to read and write in two different languages.

Bilingual: One is able to speak two languages fluently.

What is the Seal of Biliteracy?

The Seal of Biliteracy is an award given by a school district in recognition of students who have studied and attained proficiency in two or more languages by high school graduation. The Seal of Biliteracy takes the form of a seal that appears on the transcript of the graduating senior and is a statement of accomplishment for future employers and for college admissions.



Californians Together developed the concept of a Seal of Biliteracy in 2008 and worked throughout the state to help school sites, districts and others adopt and implement the Seal. Over 165 school districts are currently granting the awards, and increasing numbers of state and national professional organizations and other entities have endorsed the Seal. Legislation creating a California State Seal of Biliteracy was passed in 2011, and California became the first state in the nation to establish a state level Seal of Biliteracy.

“We must acquire the ability to understand and be understood in the languages of the worldwide neighborhood.” (World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages, 2015)

“Knowledge of more than one language and culture is advantageous for all students Bilingualism is an individual and societal asset.” (PreK-12 English Language Proficiency Standards, TESOL International Association, 2006)

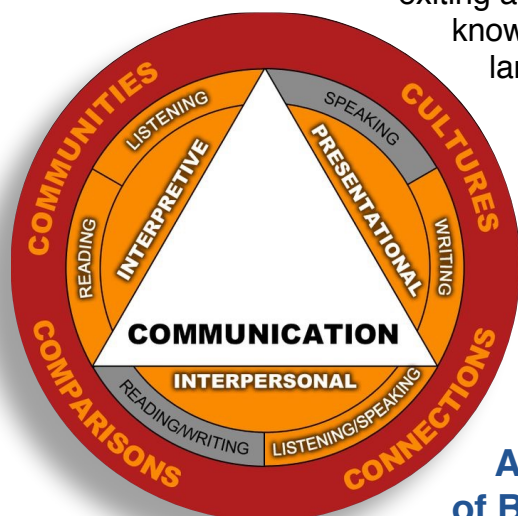
“Students’ languages and cultures are valuable resources to be tapped and incorporated into schooling.” (WIDA Guiding Principles of Language Development, # 1)

“Monolingualism is the illiteracy of the 21st century.” (Gregg Roberts, Utah State Office of Education)

Why does Westside Community Schools award the Seal of Biliteracy?

The Seal of Biliteracy is a statement of accomplishment awarded by Westside Community Schools that mastery of two or more languages is important. It honors the skills our students attain and helps to signal evidence of a student’s readiness for career and college, as well as for engagement as a global citizen.

The World Language Department at Westside High School wishes to offer every senior exiting a level 4 or 5 language course an opportunity to definitively know what level of proficiency they have reached in a second language and to be recognized for work in this endeavor.



Is the Seal of Biliteracy just for certain languages?

Seals of Biliteracy are intended for all students who master standard academic English and any other language. Assessments, such as Advanced Placement Tests (AP) or the AAPPL Measure, are available in many languages, including Latin.

As a student, why would I want to earn the Seal of Biliteracy?

The Seal of Biliteracy is an excellent way to demonstrate that you are highly proficient in two languages. It shows potential employers that you have a valuable skill for the workplace. For universities, you are identified as a person with language and biliteracy skills. Having the Seal of Biliteracy also demonstrates to universities that you are committed to academic excellence and that you will continue to work toward increasing your proficiency in another language. Earning the Seal shows that you are not just a language learner, but also a global citizen who wants to learn about differing cultural perspectives and practices.

How do I earn the Seal of Biliteracy?

- Complete the application form that your language teacher will provide (usually at the beginning of second semester).
- Show up for your scheduled test and do your best! Testing dates vary depending on the test you will take, but it will be second semester.

Requirements for earning the Seal:

- Student must be enrolled in at least three years of high school English and pass each with a 'C' or higher.
- Student must be enrolled in three or four consecutive years or more in the same language and must be of junior or senior standing.
- Achieve proficiency in one or more languages, other than English¹, by fulfilling one of the following options:
 - Attain a score of 3 or higher on the Advanced Placement (AP) Language and Culture World Language exam².
 - or -
 - Attain a level of Intermediate-1 or higher on all four sections of the AAPPL Measure.

- 1- Native and non-native users of a language other than English need to provide evidence of proficiency in that language.
- 2- Seal will be delivered at a later date due to time required to process AP scores.

Westside World Language Department's Statement of Equitable Access

ALL students means "all," regardless of language background or any identified condition that may prevent demonstration of language proficiency in one of the modes of communication, conditions such as blindness, deaf or hearing impaired, cognitive disabilities, or learning disabilities. Accommodations, such as those already in place for assessments of language, will be included for assessments used to qualify for the Seal of Biliteracy.

For more information, please visit the following sites:

<http://sealofbiliteracy.org/faq>

<https://www.actfl.org/advocacy/what-the-research-shows>

Sources used in composing this webpage:

"ACTFL." Seal of Biliteracy Guidelines Released | American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages. N.p., 23 Mar. 2015. Web. 02 May 2017.

"What is the Seal of Biliteracy?" Seal of Biliteracy. N.p., n.d. Web. 02 May 2017.