

MULTILINGUAL CHICAGO
ORGANIZATION

**A SYPNOSIS OF MULTILINGUAL CHICAGO ORGANIZATION AND THE
IMPACT OF THE ENACTMENT OF THE LEGISLATION OF THE SEAL OF
BILITERACY IN ILLINOIS**

Dr. Julio Cruz, member, of Multilingual Chicago presented to the Board members the SEAL OF BILITERACY from California and proposed similar legislation for Illinois. The Board approved the idea. Dr. Vargas volunteered to create the legislative proposal to be submitted to Senator Iris Martínez. Senator Martínez sponsored the Seal of Biliteracy senate bill that was unanimously approved by the Illinois General Assembly in July 2013 with the creation of **Public Act 098-0560**.

The following link provides a synopsis.....<https://www.isbe.net/sealofbiliteracy>

“A public school district or nonpublic school may establish the State Seal of Biliteracy program to recognize high school graduates who have attained a high level of proficiency in English and in one or more other foreign or world, languages. This recognition must be designated on a student’s transcript and high school diploma with a receipt of the State Seal of Biliteracy provided that all conditions and ...”

MULTILINGUAL CHICAGO CELEBRATION HONORING SENATOR IRIS MARTINEZ – see attached program.

**MET 4-2021: STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM MULTILINGUAL CHICAGO
SHOWING WITH THE TRANSITION OF THE HIGH SCHOOL TO COLLEGE**

A member of Multilingual Chicago, Dr. Miryam Assaf-Keller, gathered informal information (students and/or teachers) on the implementation of the Seal of Biliteracy in some High Schools in Chicago. Dr. Assaf Keller contacted the President of the organization, Dr. Maria J. Vargas, to brainstorm the idea on the need to assist the implementation of this initiative within Chicago Public Schools. The Board met and approved the formation of a Committee (Drs. Cruz, Villegas and Assaf Keller) to create a document with the purpose of establishing a formal process to solicit support from various high-ranking administrators at the Illinois State Board of Education, the Chicago Public Schools and the professional organizations which in the year 2014 endorsed the concept of the legislation in Illinois.

GOALS OF MULTILINGUAL CHICAGO

The Multilingual Chicago sub-Committee met (April 2021) and created the FIVE GOALS (listed below) which were approved by the Multilingual Chicago organization:

GOAL 1. Increase the rate of high school students in Illinois reaching the Seal of Biliteracy in their transcripts, which will entitle the students to transfer to a college/university up to 12 credit hours.

GOAL 2. Because of COVID, the instructional process has been implemented via digital mode. There has been flexibility by the State of Illinois not requiring certain assessments. Consequently, there is a need to apply flexibility with the English score to be obtained for the students working towards attaining the SEAL OF BILITERACY.

GOAL 3. Improve the dissemination of the Seal of Biliteracy to administrators/ principals in Chicago Public School system (CPS) and in other Illinois' districts identified by the Illinois State Board of Education showing the enrollment of students from language minority backgrounds.

GOAL 4. Multilingual Chicago requests from the CPS system to create a plan delineating a process to support the expansion and dissemination of the information to target administrator/principals with the goal to increase the number of high schools adopting the SEAL OF BILITERACY in their districts. In addition, Multilingual Chicago requests ISBE to require from participating Illinois Districts to create a PATHWAY for the SEAL OF BILITERACY beginning at the Elementary level like the CPS Model.

GOAL 5. Request from ISBE and the CPS system the most recent statistics showing high school students graduating with the Seal of Biliteracy in their transcripts.



MULTILINGUAL CHICAGO, INC.

and



ST. AUGUSTINE COLLEGE

Honors

Senator Iris Y. Martínez

For her leadership
in securing the

Seal of Bilingual

For our students in the
State of Illinois

Tuesday, April 15, 2014

St. Augustine College
Charlie Chaplin Auditorium
Chicago, Illinois

THE SEAL OF BILINGUALITY

Developed by Californians Together in 2008, the Seal of Bilinguality is a recognition approved by the State Board of Education and bestowed by the school district, county, or State Board of Education in recognition of students who have studied and attained a high level of proficiency in one or more languages in addition to English, by high school graduation. The Seal of Bilinguality is a statement of accomplishment for attaining competency in two or more languages and is viewed as an asset when applying for college admission or employment.

GOALS

In awarding the Seal of Bilinguality to graduating high seniors who meet the requirements, the educational agency seeks to:

- Encourage students to develop and maintain bilingual and multilingual skills;
- Recognize and honor our rich and diverse language assets;
- Promote World Language instruction in our schools;
- Promote the development of language and cultural appreciation and cross-cultural understanding;
- Encourage the development of dual language immersion programs, and world, native, and heritage language programs in schools;
- Provide employers with a method of identifying people with bilingual skills.

LEGISLATION

Multilingual Chicago initiated a Seal of Bilinguality legislation campaign in 2011. A bill was introduced in the Illinois Senate by Senator Iris Martínez and approved unanimously by both houses of the state legislature. Governor Pat Quinn signed Public Law 98-0560 on August 27, 2013, making the Seal of Bilinguality part of the Illinois School Code.

PROGRAM

Welcome – Mr. David Córdova,
Vice-President Marketing and Advancement
St. Augustine College

Opening Remarks –

Andrew C. Sund, President
St. Augustine College

Acknowledgement of Dignitaries

Mr. David Córdova

Overview of the Seal of Bilinguality And Movie

Dr. Julio Cruz and Dr. Maria J. Vargas

Introduction of Senator Iris Y. Martínez

Dr. Julio Cruz

Presentation of Award to Senator Iris Y. Martínez

Andrew C. Sund, President, St. Augustine
College

Address by Senator Iris Martínez

Recognition and remarks of other State Legislators

**Closing Remarks – Janet Nolan and
Dr. Maria Korkatsch-Groszko**

Refreshments

A resolution



adopted by *The City Council*
of the *City of Chicago, Illinois*

Presented by ALDERMAN RAY SUAREZ on MARCH 14, 2007

Whereas, There are more than half a million Chicagoans who speak English in addition to at least one of a hundred other languages; and

WHEREAS, Chicago has a long history of multilingualism dating back to the 1600's and the languages of the original Native Americans; and

WHEREAS, Multilingual and multi-cultural competencies are tremendous assets in the life of our city, and the quality of public life is enhanced as more people are able to contribute through their many languages as well as English; and

WHEREAS, Chicago is able to draw upon these resources for the greater good of its members and to provide a variety of services to international visitors and new citizens from other countries; and

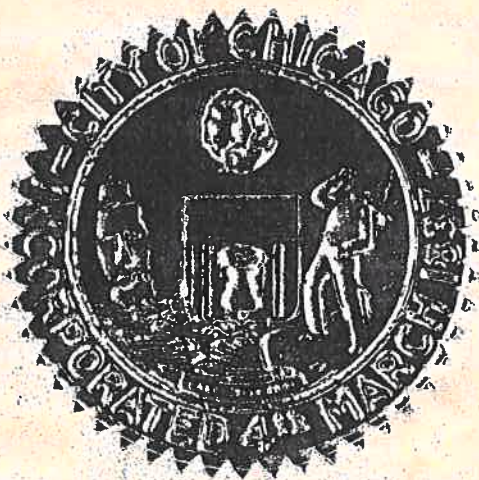
WHEREAS, As a multi-lingually rich city, Chicago publicly expresses its commitment to the support and development of multiple language skills; and

WHEREAS, Multilingualism brings many benefits to the City of Chicago, such as trade with other nations; increased scientific/cultural creativity and knowledge development; more effective international collaboration and understanding; healthier families and communities; increased family cohesion and stability; enhanced communication among diverse populations; and a more vibrant cultural life; and

WHEREAS, Chicago stands at the forefront of major cities in the United States of America that embraces the benefits and attributes of its multilingual population; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, That we, the Mayor and members of the City Council of the City of Chicago, assembled here this fourteenth day of March, 2007, A.D., do hereby recognize and applaud the many benefits of multilingualism in our culturally vibrant city; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That we urge all Chicagoans to celebrate, support and develop the great language resources of the City of Chicago in order to fully realize the rich assets they can be to the economy, the social fabric of Chicago and democratic participation in the community.



Richard M. Daley
MAYOR

Miguel del Valle
CITY CLERK



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Updating the database of the Illinois Compiled Statutes (ILCS) is an ongoing process. Recent laws may not yet be included in the ILCS database, but they are found on this site as [Public Acts](#) soon after they become law. For information concerning the relationship between statutes and Public Acts, refer to the [Guide](#).

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[Legislative Glossary](#)

Because the statute database is maintained primarily for legislative drafting purposes, statutory changes are sometimes included in the statute database before they take effect. If the source note at the end of a Section of the statutes includes a Public Act that has not yet taken effect, the version of the law that is currently in effect may have already been removed from the database and you should refer to that Public Act to see the changes made to the current law.

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(example: HB0001)

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(105 ILCS 5/2-3.159)

Sec. 2-3.159. State Seal of Biliteracy.

Search By Keyword

(a) In this Section, "foreign language" means any language other than English, including all modern languages, Latin, American Sign Language, Native American languages, and native languages.

[Search Tips](#)

(b) The State Seal of Biliteracy program is established to recognize public and non-public high school graduates who have attained a high level of proficiency in one or more languages in addition to English. School district and non-public school participation in this program is voluntary.

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(c) The purposes of the State Seal of Biliteracy are as follows:



- (1) To encourage pupils to study languages.
- (2) To certify attainment of biliteracy.
- (3) To provide employers with a method of identifying people with language and biliteracy skills.
- (4) To provide universities with an additional method to recognize applicants seeking admission.
- (5) To prepare pupils with 21st century skills.
- (6) To recognize the value of foreign language and native language instruction in public and non-public schools.
- (7) To strengthen intergroup relationships, affirm the value of diversity, and honor the multiple cultures and languages of a community.

(d) The State Seal of Biliteracy certifies attainment of a high level of proficiency, sufficient for meaningful use in college and a career, by a graduating public or non-public high school pupil in one or more languages in addition to English.

(e) The State Board of Education shall adopt such rules as may be necessary to establish the criteria that pupils must achieve to earn a State Seal of Biliteracy, which may include without limitation attainment of units of credit in English language arts and languages other than English and passage of such assessments of foreign language proficiency as may be approved by the State Board of Education for this purpose. These rules shall ensure that the criteria that pupils must achieve to earn a State Seal of Biliteracy meet the course credit criteria established under subsection (i) of this Section.



(e-5) To demonstrate sufficient English language proficiency for eligibility to receive a State Seal of Biliteracy under this Section, the State Board of Education shall allow a pupil to provide his or her school district with evidence of completion of any of the following, in accordance with guidelines for proficiency adopted by the State Board:

(1) An AP (Advanced Placement) English Language and Composition Exam.

(2) An English language arts dual credit course.

(3) Transitional coursework in English language arts articulated in partnership with a public community college as an ESSA (Every Student Succeeds Act) College and Career Readiness Indicator.

(f) The State Board of Education shall do both of the following:

(1) Prepare and deliver to participating school districts and non-public schools an appropriate mechanism for designating the State Seal of Biliteracy on the diploma and transcript of the pupil indicating that the pupil has been awarded a State Seal of Biliteracy by the State Board of Education.

(2) Provide other information the State Board of Education deems necessary for school districts and non-public schools to successfully participate in the program.

(g) A school district or non-public school that participates in the program under this Section shall do both of the following:

(1) Maintain appropriate records in order to identify pupils who have earned a State Seal of Biliteracy.

(2) Make the appropriate designation on the diploma and transcript of each pupil who earns a State Seal of Biliteracy.

(h) No fee shall be charged to a pupil to receive the designation pursuant to this Section. Notwithstanding this prohibition, costs may be incurred by the pupil in demonstrating proficiency, including without limitation any assessments required under subsection (e) of this Section.

(i) For admissions purposes, each public university in this State shall accept the State Seal of Biliteracy as equivalent to 2 years of foreign language coursework taken during high school if a student's high school transcript indicates that he or she will be receiving or has received the State Seal of Biliteracy.

(j) Each public community college and public university in this State shall establish criteria to translate a State Seal of Biliteracy into course credit based on foreign language course equivalencies identified by the community college's or university's faculty and staff and, upon request from an enrolled student, the community college or university shall award foreign language course credit to a student who has received a State Seal of Biliteracy. Students enrolled in a public community college or public university who have received a State Seal of Biliteracy must request course credit for their seal within 3 academic years after graduating from high school. (Source: P.A. 101-222, eff. 1-1-20; 101-503, eff. 8-23-19; 102-558, eff. 8-20-21.)

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For Immediate Release

Tuesday, September 2, 2014

STATE BOARD MOVES FORWARD WITH 'SEAL OF BILITERACY'

CERTIFICATE RECOGNIZES HIGH LEVEL OF PROFICIENCY IN ONE OR MORE LANGUAGES, IN ADDITION TO ENGLISH

SPRINGFIELD — The State Board of Education is moving forward with an initiative that aims to promote mastery in two or more languages. The state is among the first in the country to allow school districts to award a State Seal of Biliteracy for students who demonstrate a high level of proficiency in one or more languages, in addition to English. The seal would be placed on a student's academic transcript and diploma.

"Language skills are increasingly valuable in today's global economy," said State Superintendent of Education Christopher A. Koch. "The seal will help promote and acknowledge the great value and many benefits that come with being multilingual and multicultural."

Illinois was the third state to pass legislation offering a Seal of Biliteracy, joining California and New York. States such as New Mexico, Washington and Louisiana are among those that have since passed legislation offering the seal as well.

Illinois education officials hope the seal will inspire students to pursue biliteracy, recognize students who excel in language skills, and provide evidence of these achievements to future employers and college admissions offices.

"We hope the opportunity to earn this credential will be another tool to encourage schools to offer foreign language earlier in students' education, ideally before high school," said Illinois State Board of Education Chairman Gery J. Chico. "Even with the rigorous process proposed for earning this seal, we expect thousands of Illinois students will attain this credential within a few years."

School districts will use the language proficiency standards established by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) to qualify for the State Seal of Biliteracy program, which is optional for districts. The proposed rules also include standards for proficiency in American Sign Language, which is defined in the law as a foreign language for purposes of qualifying for the State Seal of Biliteracy.

In addition to demonstrating proficiency in a target foreign language, a student also must demonstrate proficiency in English in order to qualify for the State Seal of Biliteracy.

"The Seal of Biliteracy capitalizes and validates the linguistic assets that many students already bring to Illinois classrooms and will motivate all students to add an important skill set for college and career readiness," said Josie Yanguas, chair of the Illinois Advisory Council for Bilingual Education and director of the Illinois Resource Center. "I hope that many Illinois school districts

10 Most Common EL Languages
Spanish
Polish
Arabic
Urdu
Filipino (Tagalog)
Gujarati
Cantonese (Chinese)
Korean
Vietnamese
Mandarin (Chinese)

will consider adopting and implementing the Illinois Seal of Biliteracy.”

In the 2012-13 school year, Illinois enrolled more than 200,000 EL students. That's about 10 percent of the state's more than 2 million public school students. While the majority of EL students attend schools in Chicago and the collar counties and speak Spanish, EL students in Illinois speak more than 160 languages, in addition to English. The chart to the right lists the 10 most common languages spoken by English Learners in Illinois.

The following chart highlights the 25 districts with the highest number of EL students, broken down by number and percentage of Spanish-speaking students and non-English-, non-Spanish-speaking students, based on data from the 2012-13 school year.

District/Entity Name	Language				Total	
	Spanish		Non-English Other Than Spanish			
	No. of EL who speak Spanish	% EL who speak Spanish	No. of EL who speak other	% of EL who speak other	No. of EL in the district	District % of EL in the state
City of Chicago SD 299	60,310	86.5	9,379	13.5	69,689	33.60
SD U-46	9,186	90.7	941	9.3	10,127	4.88
Cicero SD 99	7,667	99.5	38	0.5	7,705	3.71
Aurora East USD 131	5,722	99.4	37	0.6	5,759	2.78
Waukegan CUSD 60	5,032	98.1	98	1.9	5,130	2.47
Rockford SD 205	2,773	78.1	777	21.9	3,550	1.71
Schaumburg CCSD 54	1,487	49.6	1,508	50.4	2,995	1.44
Palatine CCSD 15	2,055	76.3	637	23.7	2,692	1.30
Wheeling CCSD 21	2,116	79.7	540	20.3	2,656	1.28
CUSD 300	2,333	88.6	301	11.4	2,634	1.27
West Chicago ESD 33	2,535	97.4	69	2.6	2,604	1.26
Valley View CUSD 365U	1,964	85.1	343	14.9	2,307	1.11
Comm Cons SD 59	1,641	73.6	588	26.4	2,229	1.07
Joliet PSD 86	2,171	98.6	31	1.4	2,202	1.06
Plainfield SD 202	1,491	70.6	622	29.4	2,113	1.02

Aurora West USD 129	1,862	89.8	211	10.2	2,073	1.00
Round Lake CUSD 116	1,929	98.3	33	1.7	1,962	0.95
Indian Prairie CUSD 204	705	40.0	1,056	60.0	1,761	0.85
CCSD 62	1,043	65.2	556	34.8	1,599	0.77
Maywood-Melrose Park-Broadview 8	1,554	99.4	10	0.6	1,564	0.75
Addison SD 4	1,293	92.4	106	7.6	1,399	0.67
East Maine SD 63	450	34.2	867	65.8	1,317	0.63
CUSD 200	692	55.9	547	44.1	1,239	0.60
Cook County SD 130	1,001	97.5	26	2.5	1,027	0.50
Berwyn South SD 100	982	96.8	32	3.2	1,014	0.49

Linda Egnatz teaches Spanish at Lincoln-Way High School in CHSD 210 in New Lenox, where the district developed a local version of the Seal of Biliteracy program and 87 students earned the credential.

"To develop proficiency in another language takes time and practice," said Egnatz, the ACTFL 2014 National Language Teacher of the Year. "I now have another incentive to offer my students, in addition to the lifetime reward of increased employability and cultural understanding."

The Board voted Aug. 20 to authorize solicitation of public comment on the proposed implementation rules. ISBE will publish the program's rules in the [Illinois Register](http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/index/register/home.html) (<http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/index/register/home.html>) for public comment for 45 days. The rules also will be posted on the ISBE website. Following the public comment period, the rules will be returned to the Board for approval and then sent to the Joint Committee on Administrative Rules (JCAR) before they are published in the [Illinois Register](#). ISBE anticipates districts can make the seal available to students this school year.

<http://www.isbe.net/news/2014/pdf/seal-of-biliteracy-spanish.pdf> (/Pages/Home-Invalid-Link.aspx)

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IDEAS FOR PATHWAYS TO THE SEAL OF BILITERACY

- A. Dual language education program
- B. Late exit bilingual education program/sustained world language classes
- C. Saturday/Sunday Classes
- D. Second language book club where students read and discuss in their native/heritage language one book per month
 - In school
 - Church
 - Community
 - The web
- C. Keep portfolio showing progress made in native/heritage language
 - Books read
 - Community activities
 - Tests taken
 - Clubs
 - Classes
- D. Community service where students have to use a language and culture other than English
 - Translation services volunteer
 - Musical group
 - Dance group
 - Other community service in an ethnic community setting
- E. Awards Assembly where students are recognized for their heritage/world language skills learned at home or in school. Pathways to biliteracy may include:
 - Medals
 - Certificates
 - Ribbons
 - Points or credits
 - Honorable mentions
 - Rewards from:
 - Community agencies
 - Parent clubs at schools
 - Community organizations
 - Corporate
 - Church
 - Teachers

Pathways and Challenges to Biliteracy
Peck Elementary School – November 22, 2014

Dear Parents, Teachers, Students and Administrators,

You filled the chart papers at the conference at Peck School! Here is the summary of your wonderful ideas and suggestions. What a strong start to the creation of pathways to the Seal of Biliteracy for our children. You also identified the challenges we face along the way. Thank you for your valuable contributions.

The Multilingual Chicago Team

WHAT CAN I DO IN MY SCHOOL AS A PARENT, TEACHER OR ADMINISTRATOR?

As a PARENT, I can

- Read daily to my children;
- Provide a powerful model of ownership of my family language and culture;
- Teach proverbs, songs, games, *refranes* in my family language;
- Talk to my children about our family history;
- Teach roots and cognates and how to transfer them to English/home language, for example: *secretaria*=secretary;
- Get to know my child's teacher and support him or her;
- Offer to volunteer in the classroom;
- Participate in school meetings and other activities;
- Be a partner with teachers, other parents and the community;
- Explain the importance of being bilingual to my other family members and friends;
- Spread information to my community about the Seal of Biliteracy opportunity;

As a TEACHER, I can:

- Create an environment where the child feels comfortable and welcome;
- Develop lesson plans in both languages;
- Create and implement lessons using diverse ESL strategies;
- Provide students with bilingual resources, such as textbooks, specialized curriculum and strategies;
- Use my awareness of the cognitive transfer of the home language to learning English;
- Share my knowledge of language and culture (Domain 1) of REACH evaluation – with other teachers;
- Donate time to teach after school programs that involves second language, such as sports, etc.;
- Prepare a dialogue about the concern of maintaining the home language;
- Search information resources on the internet;
- Hold age-appropriate activities in the home language;
- Promote cultural identity; (Culture clubs, etc.)
- Use songs, dances, cultural activities and history related to the home culture as well as English;
- Evaluate students in both languages on a regular basis;
- Read in two languages at home and at school (table, mesa);
- Tie reading sessions with activities;
- Develop children's home language through opportunities to act in theater productions, stress priding in one's heritage and roots;
- Identify resources to promote an understanding of the connection between reading and writing in children's first years of education;
- :Promote Second Language Learning through:
 - * Read-Alouds
 - * Music
 - *Academic Language
 - *Oral Language

* Scaffolding Home Language Instruction

*VME—Spanish TV

*Cultural Activities

- Motivate parents to a better understanding of the links between the families' language and the second language;
- Encourage parents to feel comfortable speaking in their home language;
- Help parents become aware of the Seal of Biliteracy opportunity;
- Develop communication with parents in their home language;
- Invite parents to conferences;
- Invite parents to observe and volunteer in regular classes;
- Work for close parental and administrator support.

As an ADMINISTRATOR, I can

- Identify leaders who believe in the philosophy of the program;
- Develop partnerships with staff, families and the local community;
- Identify and hire qualified teachers for biliteracy programs.
- Develop and implement an effective plan to coach, support and evaluate teachers;
- Urge all monolingual teachers to obtain the ESL endorsement;
- Require that all bilingual preschool teachers have their bilingual/ESL endorsements;
- Provide strong administrative support and on-going training;
- Provide staff with adequate bilingual resources, such as textbooks;
- Make sure that students and teachers have access to bilingual books, across all grade levels;
- Invite parents and volunteers to work with you, the teachers and students;
- Insist that all Illinois State biliteracy testing be student-friendly;
- Ensure that administrators, parents, teachers and the community support children by learning together and strengthening our partnerships;

- Work with other principals, CPS and the State Board of Education to extend the Transitional Bilingual Education program so that all students can develop bilingual academic language proficiency;

CHALLENGES

- Currently, Transitional Bilingual Education (TBE) is required for about three years for students who are limited in English. After that, students learn English only. How do we deal with this?
- There is a bias for the ELL (Transitional Bilingual Education) among teachers and parents with conflicting values that impact students; some are afraid that children will not learn English if they maintain or acquire a second language.
- Resources are limited or even unavailable;
- Qualified staff is limited;
- Students are only assessed in English;
- There is little or no funding for second language learning;
- The Seal of Biliteracy is voluntary; make it mandatory.

QUESTIONS AND NOTES FROM THE HIGH SCHOOL WORKSHOP

1. If students take the test for the Seal as seniors, the results won't be returned until after graduation.
 2. May Spanish-speaking students who are not in an AP or advanced level of World Language still test in hopes of achieving the Seal?
 3. How are speakers of other languages assessed (Mandarin, Arabic, etc.) who need to demonstrate proficiency to earn the Seal?
 4. Can students earn the Seal with a 4 or 5 on the AP Language exams or must it be on the AP Literature exam?
 5. Some high school students are taking college level courses. Can a final exam in a college course substitute for AP exams to obtain the Seal?
 6. How will administrators be educated re: bilingual/dual language programs?
-



CPS State Seal of Biliteracy Initiative

What is Biliteracy?

Biliteracy is the ability to speak, read and write in two languages at a proficient level.

What is the State Seal of Biliteracy?

The State Seal of Biliteracy is a recognition given to high school seniors who have studied and can exhibit the ability to communicate in two or more languages (including English) by the spring of their senior year of high school. The State Seal of Biliteracy is a statement of accomplishment for college admission and for future employers.

Why implement the State Seal of Biliteracy Initiative?

Though school district participation in this initiative is voluntary, Chicago Public Schools (CPS) considers the State Seal of Biliteracy to be consistent with the current district priorities and believes it aligns with the CPS vision of promoting multilingualism, biliteracy, and inter-cultural flexibility as key contributors to students' success in college and career.

Who qualifies for the State Seal of Biliteracy?

The State Seal of Biliteracy is intended for **all** students who have mastered standard academic English and any other language, including American Sign Language. Students who are native English speakers, English Learners (ELs) and/or bilingual speakers will be eligible for the State Seal of Biliteracy.

How does a student prepare for the State Seal of Biliteracy?

Freshmen, sophomores and juniors can focus on a specific language of their choice to be better prepared for testing that will take place in their senior year of high school. They can also start taking college prep coursework that will strengthen their skills around English Language Arts in preparation for tests such as the ACT and/or SAT.

Who will award the State Seal of Biliteracy?

CPS will award the State Seal of Biliteracy to graduating seniors 1) who apply for the State Seal of Biliteracy and 2) who demonstrate proficiency in English and in a secondary language based on the test scores listed below.¹

- **English:** An ACT score of 18 or higher in English. For students who have been designated as English Learners at some point during high school, an ACCESS composite score of 5.0 with a 4.2 or higher in Reading and a 4.2 or higher in Writing is needed.
- **Secondary Language:** A test score of Intermediate High or higher on a designated language proficiency test (during SY15-16 CPS will continue to use AAPPL (the ACTFL Assessment of Performance toward Proficiency in Languages) as the assessment tool for the Seal; AAPPL measures proficiency in Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, and English).

Want to apply for the State Seal of Biliteracy?

The online student application will become available in mid-November. Stayed tuned for further communication regarding the application process and the testing of final candidates. Only students with current high school senior status will be considered for the award.

For further information, please contact Luis Narváez, Strategic Projects Director at the Office of Language and Cultural Education via email at LNarvaez2@cps.edu or by calling (773) 553-2077. You may also want to visit cps.edu/Pages/SealofBiliteracy.aspx for more information and for updates as they become available.

¹Students testing for American Sign Language and students with disabilities will be given an opportunity to qualify for the State Seal of Biliteracy through an alternative process.