Alabama Seal of Biliteracy: Overview and Guidelines for Public Schools

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PART I: ABOUT THE ALABAMA SEAL OF BILITERACY

1. 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, thereby enhancing intergroup relationships.

Students enrolled in a Language Instruction Educational Program (LIEP) or a world language course may apply for the **Alabama Seal of Biliteracy** in school districts with an approved board plan. This opportunity is available to native/heritage speakers, students engaged in self-study of their language, and those participating in a community-based language program.

2. 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 community's multiple cultures.

3. 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 assessments.
3. Demonstrate proficiency in one of the approved World Languages assessments.

PART 2. IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES

1. Implementation Process

The **Alabama Seal of Biliteracy** is implemented when a school district adopts the state guidelines, gains local approval, and establishes procedures for identifying and assessing eligible students.

Step 1. Apply for the program → Review this Overview and Guidelines. 1. Please complete your participation form and indicate your district's involvement in this program *(submit only once)*. **Note:** To receive a webinar on the **Alabama Seal of Biliteracy**, please email: **alsb@alsde.edu.**	**Form #1 District Participation**

Step 2. **School Plan Documentation**
→ Upload the documents:
   1. Implementation Plan.
   2. Board-approved Plan, this should include: Board Meeting, Agenda, Meeting Minutes, and Resolution (if applicable)
 	
Note: You will get an email confirming **ALSDE** has accepted the documents.
	Form #2: School Plan Documentation

Step 3: Implementation process
→ Refer to the Proposed Timeline on page 5.
   1. Student recruitment and identification
   2. Administer Approved Assessments
   3. Awardee identification
   4. Maintain student records by completing the **Form#3 Summary Report.**
   5. Enter students' data in Power School
   6. Informing families and students
	Form #3 Summary Report

Step 4: State recognition
→ Let's celebrate!
   1. Invite us to the ceremony, **Form #4 Award Ceremony**.
   2. Post it on social media. Send photos of your honored students. We'd love to feature and celebrate their achievements with you on our platforms!
	Form #4 Award Ceremony

To ensure a smooth and timely experience, we encourage the Seal of Biliteracy committee to plan and submit the forms promptly. Let us help you streamline the process!

2. Proposed Timeline

The **Alabama Seal of Biliteracy** process begins with district approval in early fall. Then, candidates are identified and language assessments are conducted throughout the school year. Seals are awarded and noted on diplomas upon graduation in late spring.

Advertise and Recruitment Stage	Aug-Sept	● Advertise the Seal of Biliteracy to the school community (Starting in Middle School) ● Initial student interest survey	***Read this*** Review, this Overview, and the Guidelines.
	Sept-Oct	● Establish points of contact for the students, parents, and stakeholders. ● Use your interest survey resource to identify students who qualify.	
Testing Stage	Oct-Dec	● Fall Testing window (Allow retakes enough time for retakes)	**Note**: Retakes are permitted for the domains that did not meet the criteria.
	Jan-Mar	● Spring Testing Window (Allow retakes enough time for retakes)	**Note**: Retakes are permitted for the domains that did not meet the criteria.
Identify awardees Stage	Apr-May	● Ensure that test scores meet the requirements for students to receive the **Alabama Seal of Biliteracy** upon graduation. ● Verify ELA credit for high school graduation. ● Verify WIDA access scores.	**Note**: Students may retake one or more domains to ensure their Seal qualification is met. Please allow enough time to receive the scores before graduation.
Celebration Stage	Apr-May	● **Complete Form #3** to report the students receiving the **Alabama Seal of Biliteracy**. If you wish to have medals printed, provide the printing company's information. (Allow time to ensure you receive the medals before graduation.) ● Complete the Alabama Seal of Biliteracy Student of the Year **nomination form.**	Complete **Form #3: Summary Report**
	Apr-May	● **Complete Form #4** to invite an ALSDE representative to celebrate this outstanding achievement with you. ● Enter data into PowerSchool as early as possible to ensure the Alabama Seal of Biliteracy appears on the student's transcript.	Complete **Form #4: Award ceremony**
Reflection Stage	June-Aug	● Enter students' AP and IB scores in PowerSchool by August 30. ● Identify potential student candidates for the following year.	

Contact us for any questions at **alsb@alsde.edu.**

3. Language Proficiency Requirements

English Proficiency Assessments.

English Proficiency Assessment Options Table			
Test	Source	Score	Minimum Score
ACT English	ACT	**18**	
ACT Reading	ACT	**20**	
Advanced Placement AP	AP	**3**	
International Baccalaureate®	IB	**5**	
WIDA ACCESS for ELLs	WIDA ACCESS	**4.8**	Maintain exit criteria for English proficiency
AAPPL English	ACTFL	**Intermediate Mid 3** in each of the four domains	For non-native English speakers
STAMP 4s English	LTI	**Intermediate Mid 5** in each of the four domains	For non-native English speakers

World Language Proficiency Assessments.

World Language Proficiency Assessment Options Table					
Test	Source	Languages	Domains	Notes	Minimum Score
AP *Advance Placement® Language and Culture*	College Board	Chinese French German Italian Japanese Latin Spanish	Speaking Listening Reading Writing	Administered in Spring, results are back in July.	**3**
IB *International Baccalaureate*	International Baccalaureate	Classical and Modern Languages	Speaking Listening Reading Writing	IB Spanish Standard Level (SL)	**4**
AAPPL *ACTFL Assessment of Performance Toward Proficiency in Languages*	LTI®	Arabic, Chinese French, German Italian, Japanese Korean, Russian, Portuguese, Spanish	Speaking Listening Reading Writing	Computer-delivered	**Intermediate Mid 3** in each of the four domains
STAMP 4s *Standards-based Measurement of Proficiency*	AVANT®	55+ Languages: Arabic, Korean, French, Mandarin, German, Polish, Hebrew, Portuguese, Hindi, Russian, Italian, Spanish, Japanese	Speaking Listening Reading Writing	Computer-delivered	**Intermediate Mid 5** in each of the four domains
CEFR *Common European Framework of Reference*	CEFR	Classical Languages Modern Languages	Speaking Listening Reading Writing	Computer-delivered	**B1**

OPI/WPT *Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) and Writing Proficiency Test (WPT) for the Seal of Biliteracy*	LTI®	The OPI is available in over 100 languages.	Speaking Writing	Must pass both	**Intermediate Mid** **in each of the two domains**
Other assessments to be considered for ALSDE approval are:					
TOCFL *The Test of Chinese as a Foreign Language*	TOCFL®	Mandarin	Speaking Listening Reading Writing	Computer-delivered	**B1**
STAMP WS *Language proficiency test for less commonly tested languages*	AVANT®	37+ Languages Filipino- Tagalog Persian-Farsi Pashto, Swahili, Turkish Ukrainian, Urdu Greek, Vietnamese	Speaking Writing	Computer-delivered	**Intermediate Mid 5** **in each of the two domains**
STAMP SuperLanguage *Language proficiency test for less commonly tested languages*	AVANT®	90+ Languages Arabic, Cantonese, Catalan, Dutch, Georgian, Mixteco, etc.	Speaking Writing	Computer-delivered	**Intermediate Mid 5** **in each of the two domains**
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**	

Latin and American Sign Language Assessment Options Table			
Test	**Language Assessed**	**Domains**	**Minimum score**
SLPI - ASL *Sign Language Proficiency Interview*	ASL	Functional ASL use in conversational contexts	**Intermediate**
ASLPI *American Sign Language Interview*	ASL	Receptive & expressive signing	**Level 3**
ALIRA - ACTFL *Latin Interpretive Reading Assessment*	Latin	Reading	**Intermediate Mid 3**
Other assessments to be considered for ALSDE approval are:			
ASL - AAPPL *American Sign Language*	ASL	Receptive Comprehension	**Intermediate mid 3** **in each of the two domains**
STAMP for ASL *American Sign Language Interview*	ASL	Receptive & Expressive	**Intermediate Mid 5** **in each of the two domains**
STAMP for LATIN *Latin Interpretive Reading Assessment*	Latin	Reading	**Intermediate Mid 5**

Contact the ALSDE at **ALSB@alsde.edu** to request an equivalent language assessment.

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Portfolio Proficiency Assessment

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.

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 conversations 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 (For the portfolio, a <u>minimum </u>score of 15 is required to reach the Intermediate Mid level.)

Portfolio Requirements

1. A minimum of two pieces of evidence per domain.
2. The reflection statement would explain how the portfolio demonstrates proficiency in one paragraph.
3. 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.

Portfolio Proficiency Checklist

District Name: _____   **Student Name:** _____

Language: _____   **Date Submitted:** _____

Check the box if the requirements for the Alabama Seal of Biliteracy Language Proficiency Portfolio are met.

1. District Certification
- The district certifies that no standardized language proficiency exam is available.
- The portfolio assessment meets the Intermediate level requirement.
- The assessment process follows district procedures regarding test integrity and confidentiality.
- Schools must provide IEP- and 504-documented supports that do not compromise test validity. (If applicable)

Note: Language proficiency assessments measure skills distinct from those of content tests, so some accommodations for content tests may not be allowed. Examples of non-allowable accommodations are using bilingual or monolingual dictionaries and reading aloud items on the reading test.

2. Portfolio Assessment Description
- Describe tasks used to assess each language domain (listening, speaking, reading, writing).
- Include the Portfolio Proficiency Rubric attached.

3. Student Work Samples (Provide <u>two</u> pieces of evidence for each available domain)
- Listening comprehension (e.g., comprehension responses, summaries, transcripts).
- Speaking proficiency (e.g., audio/video recordings, oral interview samples).
- Reading comprehension (e.g., reading comprehension tasks, text analysis).
- Written evidence (e.g., essays, journal entries, formal correspondence).

Note: For oral-only or unwritten languages, "Reading" and "Writing" might be replaced with "Visual Comprehension" and "Cultural/Community Communication." These assessments will replace the writing and reading scores.

> Create a storyboard or short video that presents information through a narrative.
> Illustrate or record a narrative cultural/community tradition associated with the language being assessed.

4. Criterion used for English language proficiency

- ACT English => 18
- ACT Reading => 20
- AP => 3

- WIDA => 4.8
- AAPPL => I3
- STAMP 4s => 5

5. Reflection statement
- The reflection statement should explain how the portfolio shows proficiency, either in written form (one paragraph) or verbal form (a one-minute video).

Portfolio TEAM	Name	Role	Signature	Date
Portfolio Coordinator 1				
Portfolio Coordinator 2				
Parent/Guardian				
Administrator				

4. District Data

a. Reporting Timeline

- **By May 1** → Submit [Form #3: Summary Student Data Report.](#)
- **By the 3rd Week of May** → Enter eligible students in **PowerSchool.**
- Check the Alabama Seal of Biliteracy box **only after you have met the graduation requirements.**
- **June–July** → Update students' transcripts with all the approved courses. (AP/IB, Dual Enrollment).
- **By August 30** → Finalize all students' transcripts for state reporting.

Ensure the Alabama Seal of Biliteracy appears clearly on student transcripts, showing the language(s) of proficiency.

PowerSchool English Proficiency Report Example

Districts must enter the student's first and last name, the English test name and date, and the available scores.

Academic Year	Last Name	First Name	English Test Date	English Test Name and the minimum required	English Single Score	Speaking	Reading	Listening	Writing
2025-2026	Doe	Joe	3/24/25	ACT English => 18	19				
2025-2026	Doe	Joe	3/25/24	ACT Reading => 20	20				
2025-2026	Doe	Joe	3/24/25	IB English => 5	5				
2025-2026	Doe	Joe	3/24/24	WIDA for ELL => 4.8	4.8				
2025-2026	Doe	Joe	3/25/25	AAPPL English => I3		I3	I5	I4	I3
2025-2026	Doe	Joe	3/25/25	WIDA for ELL => 4.8	4.8				
2025-2026	Doe	Joe	3/26/25	STAMP 4s => 5		5	6	6	5
2025-2026	Doe	Joe	3/27/25	ACT English => 18	18				
2025-2026	Doe	Joe	3/28/25	ACT Reading => 20	20				
2025-2026	Doe	Joe	3/29/25	AP English => 3	4				
2025-2026	Doe	Joe	3/30/25	IB English => 5	5				
2025-2026	Doe	Joe	3/31/23	WIDA for ELL => 4.8	4.8				
2025-2026	Doe	Joe	4/1/25	AAPPL English => I3		I5	I4	I3	I3
2025-2026	Doe	Joe	4/2/25	ACT English => 18	18				
2025-2026	Doe	Joe	4/3/25	ACT Reading => 20	20				
2025-2026	Doe	Joe	4/3/25	WIDA for ELL => 4.8	4.8				

PowerSchool World Language Proficiency Report Example

Districts must enter the world language, test date, test name, and the world language single score, as well as scores for each domain if available. All assessments must demonstrate at least Intermediate Mid proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

Academic Year	Last Name	First Name	World Language	World Language Test date	World Language Test Name and the minimum required	World Language Single Score	Speaking	Reading	Listening	Writing
2025-2026	Doe	Joe	Spanish	10/25/2024	AP => 3	3				
2025-2026	Doe	Joe	French	11/10/2024	IB => 4	4				
2025-2026	Doe	Joe	German	10/15/2025	AAPPL => I3		I5	I4	I3	I3
2025-2026	Doe	Joe	Spanish	4/25/2025	STAMP 4s => 5		7	6	5	5
2025-2026	Doe	Joe	Turkish	4/26/2025	STAMP Ws => 5		5			5
2025-2026	Doe	Joe	Cantonese	4/26/2025	STAMP Super Language => 5		5			5
2025-2026	Doe	Joe	Korean	4/27/2025	CEFR => B1	B1				
2025-2026	Doe	Joe	Vietnamese	4/28/2025	OPI => Intermediate Mid	Intermediate Mid				
2025-2026	Doe	Joe	Mandarin	4/29/2025	TOCFL => B1	B1				
2025-2026	Doe	Joe	Latin	4/30/2025	AAPPL (ALIRA - Latin => I3			I4		
2025-2026	Doe	Joe	Latin	5/1/2025	STAMP for Latin => 5			5		
2025-2026	Doe	Joe	ASL	5/2/2025	SLPI - ASL => Intermediate	Intermediate				
2025-2026	Doe	Joe	ASL	5/3/2025	ASLPI - ASL => 3		3		3	
2025-2026	Doe	Joe	ASL	5/4/2025	STAMP for ASL=> 5		5		5	
2025-2026	Doe	Joe	ASL	5/5/2025	AAPPL for ASL => I3		I5		I5	
2025-2026	Doe	Joe	Other	5/5/2025	ALSDE Approved Portfolio => 15	15				

Multilingual Student Case

If a student earns the Alabama Seal of Biliteracy in two languages, districts must:

2. Enter each World Language proficiency separately to reflect the student's proficiency in each specific language.

🎓 *Ensure the Alabama Seal of Biliteracy appears clearly on student transcripts, showing the language(s) of proficiency.*

PART 3. STUDENT RECOGNITION

1. Letter for the Student Example

[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 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(s)]."

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

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

2. Certificate Template

3. Alabama Seal of Biliteracy Student of the Year

a. Selection Process

1. **School-level nomination and selection process:** Schools may allow students to apply directly or have teachers and/or counselors nominate eligible students.

2. **School-level selection committee:** Consisting of world language teachers, counselors, and administrators, will evaluate nominees using the established rubric in the guidelines.

3. **District-level finalist selection:** Each district will review school-level nominees and select the highest-scoring student to represent the district in the Alabama Seal of Biliteracy Student of the Year competition. Submit the following form, **ALSB Student Nomination Form**.

4. **State-level final selection:** The ALSB team will review all district nominees and select the Alabama Seal of Biliteracy Student of the Year. In the event of a tie, the final recipient will be determined through either an interview or a committee discussion conducted by the ALSB team.

Student of the Year State Recognition

1. **Certificate** from the Alabama Department of Education.
2. Featured on the ALSDE **website** and **social media.**
3. Included in the **Alabama World Language Newsletter.**

Selection Criteria

The Student of the Year must have successfully earned the Alabama Seal of Biliteracy by demonstrating Intermediate Mid or higher proficiency in reading, writing, listening, and speaking in a world language. The student should also maintain a strong academic record and show a clear commitment to promoting multilingualism.

Ideal candidates demonstrate leadership through active involvement in language clubs, cultural programs, school initiatives, or community activities that celebrate linguistic and cultural diversity. They serve as mentors and positive role models for their peers, embodying the values of cross-cultural understanding, global citizenship, and lifelong language learning.

Applicants must submit a brief personal statement, either as an essay or a video. This statement should:

● Reflect on how bilingualism has shaped their academic, personal, and cultural growth.
● Explain how earning the Alabama Seal of Biliteracy has influenced their goals.
● Describe how they plan to use their language skills in college, career pathways, or community service.
● Demonstrate genuine passion for language learning, cultural understanding, and global engagement.

Criteria #1: Language Proficiency & Academic Achievement Rubric

Category	Needs Improvement	Developing	Proficient	Advanced	Outstanding	Score
Language Proficiency & Academic Achievement	**Intermediate Mid** but struggles with language application.	**Intermediate Mid** proficiency with limited engagement in language learning.	**Intermediate Mid or higher;** performs well in world language courses.	**Intermediate: High proficiency** and academic excellence in world language studies.	**Advanced Low or higher;** outstanding academic performance in language-related courses.	/10
Leadership & Advocacy in Language Learning	**No leadership** or advocacy role.	**Some participation** in language-related activities, but no leadership.	**Active** in promoting language learning; assists peers occasionally.	**Demonstrates leadership** in language clubs, tutoring, or advocacy.	**Leads initiatives to promote multilingualism** and cross-cultural awareness.	/10
Cross-Cultural Engagement & Community Service	**Limited** or no engagement in cultural/language service activities.	**Some** participation in cultural/language events lacks impact.	**Actively** involved in cultural programs, clubs, or service projects.	**Engages** in impactful cross-cultural service or immersion experiences.	**Leads** and initiates cultural service projects, making a significant impact.	/10
Personal Statement or Reflection	Weak or missing statement with little insight.	The statement lacks depth and personal connection to the topic of language learning.	Clear reflection on the language learning experience and its importance.	Strong reflection with personal insight on the impact.	Exceptional statement with deep personal reflection and future aspirations.	/10
Teacher/Administrator Recommendation	The recommendation is **missing** or **weak**.	The recommendation is **generic**, with little insight into the student's abilities.	**Strong** recommendation **highlighting** the student's achievements.	**Detailed** recommendation emphasizing **leadership**, **proficiency**, and **character**.	**Exceptional** recommendation with clear examples of impact and excellence.	/10

Total Score: _____ / 50

The student with the highest total score is selected as their school's **Alabama Seal of Biliteracy. Student of the Year**. If there is a tie, an interview and/or **Seal of Biliteracy committee** discussion may decide the final selection.

Email the Teacher/Administrator Recommendation Letter to **alsb@alsde.edu** no later than the third Friday of April.

Criteria #2 Reflection or Personal Statement Rubric Options

Option 1 - Essay Rubric

1. How has earning the Seal of Biliteracy influenced your academic and personal growth?
2. Can you share a memorable experience in which your bilingual skills made a difference in your community, school, or personal life?
3. How do you intend to use your language skills in the future, whether in education, your career, or global engagement?

Criteria	Excellent (2 pts)	Proficient (1 pts)	Developing (1 pts)	Emerging (1 pt)	Score
Clarity and Structure (Organization and clarity of ideas)	The essay is well-organized, clear, and flows logically. Strong introduction, body, and conclusion.	The essay is primarily clear and organized, but may have minor issues in flow or structure.	The essay has some organization, but it lacks clear structure and transitions.	The essay lacks clear organization, making it difficult to follow.	/10
Depth of Reflection (Insight into how the Seal of Biliteracy impacted academic journey and personal growth)	Provides deep, thoughtful reflection on how the Seal impacted their academic journey and personal growth with specific examples.	Reflects on the impact of the Seal but may lack depth or specific examples.	General reflection without detailed or particular examples.	Minimal or no reflection on how the Seal impacted the academic journey and personal growth.	/10
Real-Life Application (Describes a memorable experience where bilingual skills were used effectively)	Shares a powerful, concrete example of how bilingual skills significantly impacted their community, school, or personal life.	Shares a relevant experience where bilingual skills made a difference, but lacks detailed insight.	Provides a general or less impactful experience with limited connection to bilingual skills.	No memorable experience or example is irrelevant or vague.	/10
Future Goals (Describes how language skills will be used in the future for education, career, or global engagement)	Clearly articulates specific, realistic future goals for using language skills in education, career, or global engagement.	Discusses future goals but lacks specificity or clarity about how language skills will be used.	Mentions general future goals, but the connection to language skills is vague or unclear.	No clear plan for using language skills in the future.	/10
Language Proficiency (Grammar, vocabulary, sentence structure, and language skills)	Excellent use of grammar, vocabulary, and language skills. Demonstrates proficiency in both languages if applicable.	Good grammar and vocabulary, with a few minor errors. Demonstrates solid language skills.	Some grammar or vocabulary errors, but the meaning is still evident.	Frequent grammatical or vocabulary errors that hinder understanding.	/10

Total Score: _____ / 50

Option 2 - Video Rubric

Each candidate must submit a short video responding to the following questions:

1. How has earning the Seal of Biliteracy influenced your academic and personal growth?
2. Can you share a memorable experience in which your bilingual skills made a difference in your community, school, or personal life?
3. How do you intend to use your language skills in the future—whether in education, your career, or through global engagement?

In the video, students should speak authentically about how bilingualism has shaped who they are, highlight specific ways they have applied their language skills to benefit others, and express their vision for using those skills to contribute to a multilingual and interconnected world.

Criteria	Excellent (2 pts)	Proficient (1 pts)	Developing (1 pts)	Emerging (1 pt)	Score
Clarity of Expression (How the student communicates their ideas)	Clear, confident, and fluent speech. Ideas are expressed logically and engagingly.	Clear communication with minor hesitations or unclear phrasing.	Communication is unclear or disorganized, with noticeable hesitations.	Speech is difficult to understand, with frequent pauses or unclear ideas.	/10
Depth of Reflection and Memorable Experience (Analysis of personal growth, academic impact, and meaningful experiences demonstrates bilingual skills.)	Provides a deep, thoughtful reflection on the impact of the Seal of Biliteracy, including specific and meaningful examples, while demonstrating robust, relevant expertise on the benefits of bilingual skills.	Share a solid reflection on the effects of the Seal of Biliteracy, including relevant experiences, but with less detail, fewer examples, or less depth and impact than an ideal reflection.	Offer a general reflection with a few examples or connections to personal growth, sharing experiences that are less detailed or less impactful in demonstrating the value of bilingual skills.	Present little to no reflection on how the Seal of Biliteracy impacted their academic journey or personal growth.	/10
Future Goals (Describes how language skills will be used in the future)	Clearly articulates specific, well-thought-out future goals for using language skills in education, career, or global engagement.	State future goals, but they lack specificity or are less clearly connected to language skills.	Mentions future goals, but the connection to language skills is unclear or general.	No clear plan for using language skills in the future.	/10
Engagement and Creativity (The creativity of the presentation and how engaging it is for the audience)	Engages the audience with a creative and well-organized video. Uses visual or audio elements effectively.	The video is engaging and well-organized, but may lack creative elements or visual/auditory impact.	The video is engaging but lacks creativity or has technical issues.	The video is unengaging or lacks creativity and effort in presentation.	/10
Language Proficiency (Quality of grammar, vocabulary, and language skills in the video)	Excellent language skills with proper grammar and vocabulary. Demonstrates fluency in both languages (if applicable).	Good grammar and vocabulary, with a few minor errors. Demonstrates solid language skills.	Some grammatical or vocabulary errors, but the message is still evident.	Frequent errors in grammar or vocabulary hinder understanding.	/10

Total Score: _____ / 50

PART 4. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

a) General Information

1. What is the Alabama Seal of Biliteracy?

The **Alabama Seal of Biliteracy** is an official recognition awarded to graduating high school seniors with proficiency in English and at least one additional world language. This distinction appears on a student's high school transcript and/or diploma, signifying their ability to communicate effectively in two or more languages.

It is intended to honor students' multilingual skills, promote the study of languages, and provide colleges, universities, and employers with evidence of a graduate's readiness to participate in a global society. The Seal emphasizes the value of bilingualism and biliteracy as assets for college, career, and community engagement.

2. Do all schools automatically offer interested students the Alabama Seal of Biliteracy?

No. Participation in the Alabama Seal of Biliteracy program is voluntary for schools and districts. Schools must opt into the program and establish an approved implementation plan. Only after a school has joined the program and established the required procedures can eligible students apply and earn the Seal in accordance with established criteria.

3. What is proficiency?

Proficiency involves using culturally appropriate language to communicate spontaneously in non-rehearsed contexts with high competence. It also refers to a person's skill in using language to understand, speak, read, write, or sign in real-life situations.

4. What is the purpose of the Alabama Seal of Biliteracy?

The **Alabama Seal of Biliteracy** aims to recognize high school graduates who can communicate in English and at least one other world language. These students possess knowledge and skills that prepare them to succeed in college, careers, the military, and today's diverse global society. Specifically, the Seal of Biliteracy aims to:
- Encourage the study of languages.
- Certify the achievement of biliteracy.
- Provide employers with insights into graduates' language skills.
- Offer universities an additional tool to identify strong candidates for admission and scholarships.
- Prepare students with valuable 21st-century skills.
- Recognize the importance of both foreign and native language instruction.
- Strengthen intergroup relationships, affirm the value of diversity, and honor communities' rich cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

5. How does the Alabama Seal of Biliteracy benefit students?

The **Alabama Seal of Biliteracy** highlights a student's ability to communicate in two or more languages, providing a competitive edge in academic and professional settings. It helps students showcase their language proficiency to colleges, employers, and military recruiters, enhancing their resumes and strengthening applications for scholarships, admissions, and job opportunities in today's global workforce.

6. Who qualifies for the Alabama Seal of Biliteracy?

All Alabama *public school* students can earn the **Alabama Seal of Biliteracy** by providing evidence of achieving the required level of language proficiency in English and one or more additional languages during their high school years. To obtain this Seal, students must demonstrate a defined level of proficiency in English and one or more additional languages, whether those languages are native, heritage, or learned in school or other settings. Some components of the **Alabama Seal of Biliteracy** may be completed for English learners and other groups before high school. The focus is on attaining the proficiency level required in English and in one or more other languages by the time they graduate from high school.

7. What are each school's responsibilities?

The Alabama Seal of Biliteracy will be awarded upon high school graduation. Schools that wish to grant the Seal must:

Designate a contact person at each participating high school who is responsible for:
- Collecting applications from students.
- Verifying the qualifications of applicants.
- Submitting selected students to the Seal.
- Ensuring students awarded the Seal were selected through data collection and reported to ALSDE in PowerSchool.
- Ensure PowerSchool automatically displays the Alabama Seal of Biliteracy designation on students' transcripts, enabling anyone to easily identify the language(s) in which each student has demonstrated proficiency.
- Ensure that students who have earned the Seal are prominently recognized at graduation and senior award ceremonies.

8. When and how do students learn about the Alabama Seal of Biliteracy?

Counselors should inform all students and their families about the **Alabama Seal of Biliteracy** when they enter middle and high school. This allows students to organize their schedules and meet the requirements needed to receive this honor.

9. How do we ensure equitable access to the Alabama Seal of Biliteracy?

All students mean "all," regardless of language background or any identified condition that may exclude the demonstration of language proficiency in one of the ACTFL-defined modes of communication, such as blindness, deafness, hearing impairment, or learning disabilities. Accommodations, like those already in place for Alabama-required language assessments, should be included for assessments used to qualify for the **Alabama Seal of Biliteracy**. Technology provides the means to make Seal of Biliteracy assessments accessible to all students.

10. What is the difference between the Global Seal and the Alabama Seal of Biliteracy?

The Global Seal of Biliteracy is a nationally and internationally recognized credential available to individuals across states and countries. In contrast, the Alabama Seal of Biliteracy is explicitly awarded to eligible students graduating from Alabama public schools. While both recognize language proficiency, the Alabama Seal offers official recognition at the state level and is noted on the student's high school transcript.

The **Alabama Seal of Biliteracy** acknowledges language skills within the state's educational framework, supporting local workforce needs and higher education opportunities. It emphasizes linguistic diversity in communities and encourages students to continue studying languages for academic and cultural growth. The Alabama Seal of Biliteracy provides a unique advantage: it is officially recorded on a student's high school transcript. Colleges and employers in Alabama and beyond recognize it to identify and acknowledge a graduate's bilingual capabilities quickly.

By earning this designation, students demonstrate their linguistic achievements and receive a tangible credential that enhances their college and workforce readiness in Alabama. The Alabama Seal requires students to demonstrate proficiency in a world language at an intermediate level (3), while the Global Functional Awards require a higher level of fluency (5). Both seals underscore the significance of biliteracy, but the Alabama designation guarantees that students receive acknowledgment at the state level—reinforcing the importance of multilingualism in local industries and global settings.

All Global Seal of Biliteracy candidates must meet first- and second-language requirements to receive a Global Seal of Biliteracy. Qualifying test scores must be submitted within 12 months of the test date and protected by an impartial person. Referred to: [Global Seal | Qualified Tests](#).

b) Requirements

11. What proficiency level do students need to demonstrate?

Refer to the approved assessments section on page 6.

c) Implementation and Reporting

12. What is the cost of earning an Alabama Seal of Biliteracy?

Alabama law prohibits schools and districts from charging students administrative or processing fees for obtaining a Seal of Biliteracy. However, students may be responsible for any assessment costs the school or district does not cover. Participating schools and districts are responsible for the expenses associated with ordering diplomas, medals, trophies, and similar items. Schools and districts are encouraged to seek all available funding sources, including federal funds, grants, and local funding options. Districts will determine the funding source for students' proficiency testing. Possible costs include testing or retesting fees, compensation for school-based committee members, awards, communication about the qualification and award process to students, parents, and the community, and other additional expenses.

13. Who will ensure students meet the Alabama Seal of Biliteracy qualifications?

Schools and districts will develop local procedures to determine who at the school level is responsible for verifying the qualifications of interested students and for maintaining records of each student's qualifications who is awarded the Seal. The **Alabama Seal of Biliteracy** committee will verify the reported data in PowerSchool by checking the box that states the student has completed their graduation requirements, typically in May.

14. How will schools award the Alabama Seal of Biliteracy if AP and IB scores are not reported by July?

Many students may not take the AP World Language or IB exam until their senior year in high school, and the scores will be reported after graduation in July. The Seal of Biliteracy can be awarded *retroactively* if the required scores have been met (a minimum score of 3 on the AP World Language exam and a minimum score of 4 on an IB Standard Diploma Program).

15. How will schools report the Seal?

Spring Reporting Period: Once the school has confirmed that the student has met the proficiency requirement and is expected to fulfill all high school graduation criteria, the school must submit:

1. Complete the Summary Award Report form.
2. Add designation in PowerSchool.
3. Invite us to the Award Ceremony.

Summer Reporting Period: Since AP and IB exam results are unavailable until mid-summer, seniors who receive the **Alabama Seal of Biliteracy** can enter the PowerSchool designation no later than **August 30.**

16. How is the Alabama Seal of Biliteracy presented to students?

State law mandates that the Alabama Seal of Biliteracy be officially awarded only upon graduation. However, once students qualify for the award, they may want to indicate on college applications or to future employers that they are officially qualified to receive it. Furthermore, state law requires that a notation of a student's achievement of the Alabama Seal of Biliteracy appear on their official academic transcript at graduation as follows: **"Student has earned the Alabama Seal of Biliteracy in the following language(s): _____."** Schools and districts might consider creating and distributing additional student rewards, such as certificates, medals, plaques, or graduation cords.

17. Can a high school student still receive the Alabama Seal of Biliteracy after graduation?

No. Students must indicate their intent to earn the Alabama Seal of Biliteracy and complete all required language assessments before graduation. The process cannot be initiated or completed after graduation.

18. Can a district give the Alabama Seal of Biliteracy even if it is not part of the program?

Only districts officially participating in the Alabama Seal of Biliteracy program are eligible to award the Seal. Participation ensures consistent standards, proper documentation, and inclusion in PowerSchool reports.

d) Assessments

19. Can ASL and Latin students apply for the Alabama Seal of Biliteracy?

Yes. Due to the unique characteristics of specific languages, special allowances will be made in cases where language assessments across all three modes of communication defined by ACTFL (interpersonal, interpretive, and presentational) may not be appropriate or available. The Alabama Department of Education reserves the right to accept a different assessment that aligns with the spirit of the **Alabama Seal of Biliteracy**. Students seeking the Seal through languages not characterized by listening, speaking, reading, or for which there is no writing system will demonstrate the expected proficiency level by assessing the modalities that characterize communication in that language.

Examples include:

- Latin and Classical Greek: The assessment focuses on interpretive reading and presentational writing rather than listening or interpersonal face-to-face communication.

- American Sign Language (ASL)—This assessment evaluates interpersonal signed exchange and presentational signing. It demonstrates understanding of ASL (such as interpreting a signed lecture or summarizing and responding to questions aimed at overarching understanding).
- Native American Languages – assessment covers interpersonal face-to-face communication and includes interpretive listening, presentational speaking, as well as writing and reading, where a written

20. What if students want to obtain the Alabama Seal of Biliteracy, but no AP or IB test is available for a specific language?

The **Alabama Seal of Biliteracy** guidelines include a table listing approved proficiency exams and the required minimum scores or proficiency levels. Please email **alsb@alsde.edu** if you have questions about languages that are not listed.

21. When should we start assessing the eligible students?

Assessing students as early as possible is beneficial because it allows ample time for any necessary retakes. Ideally, this assessment should take place in the fall or early spring. The Seal of Biliteracy committee recommends testing during these times so that students receive their results before submitting their college applications, in case they need to retake the test. Students who are on track to graduate can inform colleges that they are "Seal of Biliteracy eligible."

22. Can a student take the World Language assessment more than once?

Yes, students are allowed to take an approved world language assessment more than once, if necessary, to demonstrate the required level of proficiency. Please note that some exams may be offered only once a year, while others may be offered multiple times. School officials and testing coordinators should determine a local schedule for students based on their language assessments and the preferences of regional stakeholders. If an assessment vendor allows retakes of individual sections, students may retake only the sections where they did not initially achieve a qualifying score of Intermediate High or higher.

23. What funding is available to support the administration of World Language assessments to students?

State funding is not available to support world language proficiency testing. The Alabama Department of Education and Workforce encourages schools and districts to use local and federal funding sources to help students who cannot afford assessment costs. Additionally, some vendors may offer a reduced price if a district or school purchases a minimum number of evaluations. Schools and districts might consider forming regional consortia to facilitate testing for students seeking the **Alabama Seal of Biliteracy.**

24. Are accommodations available for students with IEPs or 504 plans?

By state policy, any testing accommodations outlined in a student's IEP or 504 plan and approved for use on Alabama's statewide assessments must be provided to the student.

25. Can a student test on a language that is not listed?
The Alabama Seal of Biliteracy provides a table listing the approved proficiency exams and the required minimum scores or proficiency levels. Please contact us at **alsb@alsde.edu** with any inquiries about languages not listed.

26. In what ways can I recognize the recipients?
- Awards ceremony at school/district/board meeting
- Notation transcript
- **[Certificate Template](#)**
- A letter to parents/guardians
- Cord, sash, or medallion worn at graduation
- Announcement in the local newspaper
- Announcement via social media, you may include our Twitter: **@alsobiliteracy**
- Notification to the board of education
- Invitation for awardees to speak to younger students about the program
- Recorded video recognizing attendees

PART 5. REFERENCES

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