

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 6, 2022, the State of Alabama signed into law Alabama Act #2022-200, recognizing seniors who have demonstrated English proficiency and Intermediate Mid (ACTFL) proficiency or higher in one additional world language, including American Sign Language. This designation, which appears on a student's high school transcript, helps employers and institutions of higher education identify bilingual candidates with valuable 21st-century skills and a commitment to language learning and cultural understanding.

The **Alabama Seal of Biliteracy** emphasizes the importance of bilingualism for improved communication, economic growth, and cultural understanding while strengthening connections among individuals and communities.

Students enrolled in a world language course may apply for the Alabama Seal of Biliteracy in school districts with an approved Seal of Biliteracy implementation plan. Students can also qualify if they demonstrate proficiency in a native or heritage language through independent study or participation in a community-based language program, provided they meet all Alabama Seal of Biliteracy eligibility and assessment requirements.

2. Purpose

The **Alabama Seal of Biliteracy** is grounded in research highlighting the benefits of mastering two or more languages. The Alabama Seal recognizes and promotes the value of multilingualism 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:

- Encourage students to study multiple languages;
- Recognize the attainment of biliteracy at a minimum of Intermediate Mid (ACTFL) proficiency;
- Provide employers with a way to identify individuals who demonstrate language and biliteracy skills;
- Provide institutions of higher education with a method to recognize language proficiency and award academic credit to students seeking admission, as determined by the institution;
- Prepare students with skills needed for college, career, and the 21st-century workplace;
- Promote world language instruction in Alabama schools; and
- Recognize and strengthen the linguistic and cultural assets represented in Alabama communities.

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 II. PARTICIPATION AND PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

1. How to Participate

The **Alabama Seal of Biliteracy** district participation process begins with completing the required participation form and securing local authorization to implement the program. The steps below outline the initial actions districts should take to apply for the program, complete the Implementation Plan, and submit the required documentation to the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE).

Districts are encouraged to complete these steps early to allow sufficient time for review, planning, student identification, assessment, and program implementation.

Step 1. Apply for the program → Review the Overview and Guidelines. → Complete the Participation Form and indicate your district's involvement in the program. Submit the form only once. → Request a Virtual Interest Meeting to learn more about the program, requirements, implementation process, and next steps. Questions? Email to: alsb@alsde.edu.	<u>Form #1 District Participation</u> 
Step 2. Implementation Plan → Complete and submit the Alabama Seal of Biliteracy Implementation Plan. The local Board of Education must approve the Alabama Seal of Biliteracy Implementation Plan, or the Superintendent must formally sign it. This approval confirms district authorization to implement the program in alignment with state guidelines. Supporting documentation may include, as applicable: • Board meeting documentation, including the date and agenda item reflecting approval or discussion of the Seal of Biliteracy • Official meeting agenda • Approved meeting minutes • Board resolution, if the district chooses to formally adopt the Seal through a resolution Note: Districts will receive an email confirmation once the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) has reviewed and approved the submitted documentation. To receive a copy of the Implementation Plan or to schedule a virtual information meeting, please contact alsb@alsde.edu.	<u>Form #2: Implementation Plan</u> 

2. Suggested Implementation Plan

The timeline below provides a suggested framework for implementing the **Alabama Seal of Biliteracy** throughout the school year. Districts may adjust the timing based on their local calendar, assessment schedules, and graduation requirements while ensuring that all program requirements and deadlines are met.

Stage	Timeline	Key Actions
1. Awareness & Recruitment	Aug–Sept	- Promote the Alabama Seal of Biliteracy to the school community, beginning in middle school. - Administer an initial student interest survey. - Review the guidelines, overview, requirements, and program expectations. - Identify the staff responsible for coordinating the program.
2. Candidate Identification & Planning	Sept–Oct	- Establish points of contact for students, families, and stakeholders. - Use the interest survey and available student data to identify potential candidates. - Develop a district/school testing and implementation schedule. - Communicate assessment requirements and timelines to students and families.
3. Testing	Oct–Dec	- Administer approved language assessments during the fall testing window. - Allow sufficient time for retesting, when permitted, for domains that do not meet the required criteria. - Document assessment results.
4. Testing & Candidate Identification	Jan–Mar	- Administer approved language assessments during the spring testing window. - Allow sufficient time for retesting, when permitted. - Identify potential awardees based on available assessment results. - Follow up with students who still need to complete required assessments.
5. Verification & Graduation Preparation	Apr–May	- Verify that all required assessment scores meet the Alabama Seal of Biliteracy eligibility criteria. - Verify that students meet applicable English proficiency and graduation requirements, including WIDA ACCESS results when applicable. - Submit the Alabama Seal of Biliteracy Student of the Year nomination by the established deadline. - Complete Form #3: Award Ceremony Invitation by May 1. - Enter verified Seal of Biliteracy data into PowerSchool by the district's official deadline for transcript processing.
6. Recognition & Celebration	May	- Recognize students who have earned the Alabama Seal of Biliteracy at graduation and/or during the district's recognition ceremony. - Ensure the Seal and demonstrated language(s) are accurately documented on official student records.
7. Reflection & Planning	June–Aug	- Review participation, assessment results, and implementation processes. - Enter AP and IB scores into PowerSchool by July 31. - Identify potential candidates for the following school year. - Review and refine recruitment, assessment, and recognition procedures for the next cycle.



3. Language Proficiency Requirements

a. English Proficiency Assessment Options

English Proficiency Assessment Options Table			
Test	Source	Score Range	Minimum Score
ACT English	ACT	18-36	18
ACT Reading	ACT	20-36	20
Advanced Placement AP	AP	3-5	3
International Baccalaureate®	IB	5-7	5
WIDA ACCESS	WIDA	4.8-6	4.8 Maintain exit criteria for English proficiency
AAPPL English	ACTFL	I3 -, I-4, I-5, A-1	I-3 in each of the four domains For non-native English speakers
STAMP 4s English	LTI	5-9	5 in each of the four domains For non-native English speakers

b. World Language Proficiency Assessment Options

World Language Proficiency Assessment Options Table					
Test	Source	Languages	Domains	Score Range	Minimum Score
AP <i>Advanced Placement® Language and Culture</i>	College Board	Chinese, French German, Italian Japanese Latin, Spanish	Speaking Listening Reading Writing	3-5	3
IB <i>International Baccalaureate</i>	International Baccalaureate	Arabic, Chinese French, German Italian, Japanese Korean, Portuguese, Spanish	Speaking Listening Reading Writing	4-7	4
AAPPL <i>ACTFL Assessment of Performance Toward Proficiency in Languages</i>	LTI®	Arabic, Chinese French, German Italian, Japanese Korean, Russian, Portuguese Spanish	Speaking Listening Reading Writing	I3 -, I-4, I-5, A-1	I-3 in each of the four domains
STAMP 4s <i>Standards-based Measurement of Proficiency</i>	AVANT®	55+ Languages: Arabic, Korean, French, Mandarin, German, Hebrew, Japanese, Portuguese, Hindi, Russian, Italian, Spanish	Speaking Listening Reading Writing	5-9	5 in each of the four domains
CEFR <i>Common European Framework of Reference</i>	CEFR	Classical Languages Modern Languages	Speaking Listening Reading Writing	B1, B2, C1, C2	B1 in each of the four domains
OPI/WPT <i>Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) and Writing Proficiency Test (WPT) for the Seal of Biliteracy</i>	LTI®	The OPI is available in over 100 languages.	Speaking Writing	Intermediate Mid, Intermediate High Advanced Low, Advanced Mid, Advanced High	Intermediate Mid in each of the two domains Speaking & Writing
STAMP WS <i>Language proficiency test for less commonly tested languages</i>	AVANT®	37+ Languages Filipino-Tagalog Persian-Farsi, Pashto, Swahili, Turkish, Ukrainian, Urdu, Greek, Vietnamese	Speaking Writing	5-9	5 in each of the two domains Speaking & Writing
STAMP SuperLanguage <i>Language proficiency test for less commonly tested languages</i>	AVANT®	90+ Languages Arabic, Cantonese, Catalan, Dutch, Georgian, Mixteco, etc.	Speaking Writing	5-9	5 in each of the two domains Speaking & Writing
ALTA	ALTA Languages	+90 languages	Speaking Listening	5-9	5 in each of the three domains



	Offered		Writing		Speaking & Listening & Writing
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American Sign Language (ASL)			
Assessment	Source	Score Range	Minimum Score
<u>SLPI - ASL</u> <i>American Sign Language Interview</i>	Rochester Institute of Technology	Intermediate, Intermediate Plus Advanced, Advanced Plus	Intermediate in each of the two domains Receptive & expressive
<u>ASLPI - ASL</u> <i>American Sign Language Proficiency Interview</i>	Gallaudet University	3-5	3 in each of the two domains Receptive & expressive
<u>AAPPL - ASL</u> <i>American Sign Language</i>	LTI	I3 -, I-4, I-5, A-1	I-3 in each of the two domains Receptive & expressive
<u>STAMP for ASL</u> <i>American Sign Language Interview</i>	Avant	5-9	5 in each of the two domains Receptive & expressive
LATIN			
Assessment	Source	Score Range	Minimum Score
<u>AAPPL - ALIRA - LATIN</u> <i>Latin Interpretive Reading Assessment</i>	ACTFL	I3 -, I-4, I-5, A-1	I-3 in one domain Reading
<u>STAMP for LATIN</u> <i>Latin Interpretive Reading Assessment</i>	AVANT	5-9	5 in one domain Reading
CHINESE (Mandarin)			
Assessment	Source	Score Range	Minimum Score
<u>TOCFL</u> <i>Test of Proficiency in Chinese</i>	The Test of Chinese as a Foreign Language	B1, B2, C1 C2	B1 in each of the three domains Listening, Speaking, Reading
KOREAN			
Assessment	Source	Score Range	Minimum Score
<u>TOPIK II plus TOPIK Speaking</u> <i>Test of Proficiency in Korean</i>	The Korean Ministry of Education	120-149	120 in each of the three domains Listening, Reading, Writing

Portfolio Assessment

A portfolio assessment may be considered only when no approved standardized assessment is available to measure proficiency in the target language.

Prior approval from the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) is required, and schools and districts should submit their request as early as possible to allow sufficient time for review before the student's assessment window.

For portfolio assessment requirements, refer to the Portfolio Assessment Rubric on page 8 and the Portfolio Assessment Checklist on page 9.

To request an equivalent language assessment for a language without an approved standardized assessment, contact ALSDE at ALSB@alsde.edu.



c. Portfolio Assessment: Requirements and Rubric

According to Alabama Act #2022-200 (page 4), a portfolio assessment may be considered only when no standardized examination exists to assess proficiency in the target language. The school district must certify to the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) that the portfolio or alternative examination demonstrates rigor equivalent to the **Intermediate Mid (ACTFL)** proficiency requirement.

The World Language Proficiency Assessment must evaluate **listening, speaking, reading, and writing** skills at the **Intermediate Mid (ACTFL)** level or higher. The assessment should be comparable in structure and rigor to the Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) or other recognized proficiency assessments used by states to evaluate tribal, heritage, or less commonly taught languages.

Domain	Evidence Examples	1 Emerging Novice Mid–High	2 Developing Intermediate Low	3 Expanding Intermediate Mid	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 (To meet the Intermediate Mid proficiency requirement, a student must earn at least 15 points on the rubric and receive no lower than a 3 in each domain.)

Portfolio Requirements

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



d. Portfolio Assessment 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 two 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. Criteria 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				



PART III. REPORTING IN POWERSCHOOL

Districts should retain supporting assessment documentation, including assessment results spreadsheets from assessment vendors, for verification.

1. Reporting Timeline

- **PowerSchool Entry:** Enter all Alabama Seal of Biliteracy data into PowerSchool by your district's deadline to ensure accurate, timely graduation records.
- **July 31 Deadline:** Finalize all transcript updates, including AP, IB, and Dual Enrollment coursework, by July 31.
- **Official Transcripts:** The Alabama Seal of Biliteracy and the language(s) in which the student demonstrated proficiency should appear on the student's official transcript for recognition by colleges, universities, and employers.

2. Public Schools Data Entry

1. Check the box **only after confirming** that the student has completed all graduation requirements, then enter the award date.
2. **English Proficiency Entry:**
 - Language assessment name
 - Name of the assessment (ACT, AP, IB, WIDA, AAPPL, STAMP, etc.)
 - Assessment Date
 - Composite Score (only for ACT, AP, IB, WIDA): **only enter one method of English proficiency for each student.**

For STAMP 4S and AAPPL English scores, enter:

- Speaking
 - Reading
 - Listening
 - Writing
3. **World Language Proficiency Entry** (for each awarded language)
 - Language assessment name
 - Name of the assessment (AAPPL, STAMP, TOCFL, TOPIK, etc.)
 - Assessment Date
 - Composite Score (only for AP, IB)
 - Enter the scores for all language domains available for the particular language or assessment reported.

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

3. Independent School Systems Data Entry

If your district is an independent system and does not use PowerSchool, please complete and submit the [Independent School System Summary Report](#) before the district's official transcript processing deadline to ensure the timely processing of graduation records and Seal of Biliteracy documentation.



PART IV. STUDENT RECOGNITION

1. Suggested Student Example



[Date]

Dear [Student's Name],

Congratulations!

We are pleased to inform you that you have earned the Alabama Seal of Biliteracy in recognition of your proficiency in English and [Target Language].

The Alabama Seal of Biliteracy recognizes graduating students who demonstrate proficiency in English and one or more additional languages. Established through Alabama Act 2022-200, signed into law on April 6, 2022, the Seal recognizes students' achievement in bilingualism and biliteracy and celebrates the valuable linguistic and cultural skills they bring to their communities, colleges, and future careers.

Your achievement has been recorded by your school and reported to the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE). The Alabama Seal of Biliteracy designation will also be documented on your official high school transcript.

We encourage you to include this achievement on college, scholarship, internship, employment, and other applications as evidence of your language proficiency and commitment to biliteracy.

You may use the following statement on your résumé or applications:

"I have earned the Alabama Seal of Biliteracy in [Target Language]."

Once again, congratulations on this outstanding achievement. We are proud of your dedication, hard work, and commitment to developing proficiency in multiple languages.

Sincerely,

[Principal's Name]

[Title]

[School Name]

[School/District Name]



2. Certificate Template

[Follow link to make a copy Alabama Seal of Biliteracy Certificate \(4-ALSB Certificate Template\).](#)



The certificate template features a cream-colored background with a dark blue border. It is decorated with gold scrollwork in the corners. The title "CERTIFICATE" is in large, bold, blue serif font, with "ALABAMA SEAL OF BILITERACY" in a smaller, bold, blue serif font below it. The text "This certificate is proudly awarded to" is in a black serif font. A line for the recipient's name is followed by a line for the "School Year". The Alabama Seal of Biliteracy is a circular emblem with a red map of Alabama in the center, surrounded by a gold wreath and the words "STATE OF ALABAMA" and "SEAL OF BILITERACY". Below the seal is a line for the "Principal". A paragraph of text is enclosed in a blue-bordered box, reading: "We congratulate you and recognize your perseverance in achieving the Alabama Seal of Biliteracy skills, which are necessary for active and responsible participation in the global, social, and economic life of the 21st Century, in addition to satisfying all high school graduation requirements."

CERTIFICATE
ALABAMA SEAL OF BILITERACY

This certificate is proudly awarded to _____

_____ School Year _____

Principal _____

We congratulate you and recognize your perseverance in achieving the Alabama Seal of Biliteracy skills, which are necessary for active and responsible participation in the global, social, and economic life of the 21st Century, in addition to satisfying all high school graduation requirements.



PART V. 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 language study, 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 joins the program and establishes the required procedures can eligible students apply and earn the Seal under 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** recognizes high school graduates who can communicate in English and at least one other world language. These students have the knowledge and skills to succeed in college, careers, the military, and today's diverse global society.

Specifically, the Seal of Biliteracy aims to:

- Encourage students to study multiple languages;
- Recognize the attainment of biliteracy at a minimum of Intermediate Mid (ACTFL) proficiency;
- Provide employers with a way to identify individuals who demonstrate language and biliteracy skills;
- Provide institutions of higher education with a method to recognize language proficiency and award academic credit to students seeking admission, as determined by the institution;
- Prepare students with skills needed for college, career, and the 21st-century workplace;
- Promote world language instruction in Alabama schools; and
- Recognize and strengthen the linguistic and cultural assets represented in Alabama communities.



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, strengthening resumes and 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 before high school for English learners and other groups. The focus is on attaining the required proficiency level in English and in one or more other languages by the time students graduate from high school.

7. What Are Each School's Responsibilities?

The Alabama Seal of Biliteracy is awarded upon high school graduation. Schools wishing to grant the Seal must fulfill the following responsibilities:

- **Designate a Contact Person** at each participating high school who will be responsible for:
 - Collecting student applications
 - Verifying applicant eligibility and qualifications
 - Coordinating assessment documentation and reporting procedures
- **Ensure Student Recognition:**

Schools should ensure that students who earn the Alabama Seal of Biliteracy are prominently recognized during graduation ceremonies, senior awards programs, and other school recognition events.
- **Ensure Accurate Data Collection and Reporting:**

Schools must verify that all Seal recipients are identified through accurate data collection procedures and properly reported in PowerSchool or through the approved reporting process for independent school systems.
- **Ensure Transcript Notation:**

Schools must ensure PowerSchool accurately displays the Alabama Seal of Biliteracy designation on students' official transcripts, including the language(s) in which proficiency was demonstrated and the level of proficiency, so colleges, universities, and employers can easily identify biliteracy achievement.

8. When and How Do Students Learn About the Alabama Seal of Biliteracy?

School counselors and educators should inform students and their families about the Alabama Seal of Biliteracy beginning in middle school and continuing throughout high school. Early awareness helps students plan their academic pathways, enroll in appropriate language courses or programs, and meet the requirements to earn this distinction upon graduation.



9. How Do We Provide Access to the Alabama Seal of Biliteracy?

The Alabama Seal of Biliteracy is available to students who meet the established eligibility and proficiency requirements, regardless of language background or identified disability. Students who require accommodations to demonstrate proficiency in one or more of the ACTFL-defined modes of communication may use appropriate supports.

Schools and districts should provide appropriate accommodations and accessibility supports consistent with those used for Alabama-required assessments and, when appropriate, the student's instructional setting. Accommodations should allow students to demonstrate proficiency in reading, writing, listening, and speaking, as applicable, without changing the proficiency level being assessed.

Advances in technology and accessible assessment practices can help remove barriers to participation and allow students to demonstrate their language proficiency through approved assessment procedures.

10. What Is the Difference Between the Global Seal and the Alabama Seal of Biliteracy?

The **Alabama Seal of Biliteracy** is a state-recognized distinction awarded by the Alabama State Department of Education to graduating high school students who demonstrate proficiency in English and at least one additional language. The Seal is officially recorded on the student's high school transcript and/or diploma and is aligned with Alabama graduation recognition requirements.

The **Global Seal of Biliteracy** is an international credential that recognizes language proficiency at standardized levels, including Functional, Working, and Professional. Students in public or private schools may earn it beginning in eighth grade, as well as college students and adults, based on qualifying assessment scores.

While the Alabama Seal of Biliteracy is connected specifically to Alabama high school graduation recognition, the Global Seal of Biliteracy provides a portable, internationally recognized certification of multilingual proficiency that may be earned independently of state graduation requirements and at various stages of academic or professional life.

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 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. When Must AP or IB Scores Be Reported for the Alabama Seal of Biliteracy?

Many students may take the AP World Language or IB exam during their senior year, with official scores often released after graduation in July. In these cases, the Alabama Seal of Biliteracy may be awarded retroactively once schools verify the required scores.

To qualify, students must earn a minimum score of 3 on the AP World Language exam or 4 on the IB Standard Level exam. Upon receipt of official results, schools should update student records accordingly to reflect Seal eligibility.

15. How Will Schools Report the Seal?

Once the school has confirmed that a student has met the required proficiency levels and is expected to fulfill all high school graduation requirements, the school must complete the following steps:

- **Invite the ALSDE team to the Award Ceremony.**
- **Public School Districts (PowerSchool):**
Enter all Seal of Biliteracy recipient data into PowerSchool by the district's transcript processing deadline (typically during the third week of May). Ensure that the Alabama Seal of Biliteracy designation appears on the student's official transcript.
- **Independent School Systems:**
Complete and submit the Independent School System Summary Report by the district's official transcript processing deadline to ensure accurate reporting and timely processing of graduation records.
- **Summer Reporting Period:**
Because AP and IB assessment results are not released until mid-summer, graduating seniors who qualify through AP or IB exams may have their Alabama Seal of Biliteracy records updated no later than **July 31st**. Districts should ensure that transcripts are updated accordingly once official scores are received.

16. How Is the Alabama Seal of Biliteracy Presented to Students?

State law mandates that the Alabama Seal of Biliteracy be officially awarded upon high school graduation. However, once students have met all qualification requirements, they may indicate on



college applications or to prospective employers that they are pending recipients of the Seal. State law further requires that the

Alabama Seal of Biliteracy is documented on the student's official academic transcript at graduation using the following notation:

“Student has earned the Alabama Seal of Biliteracy in the following language(s): _____.”

In addition to transcript notation, schools and districts may provide supplemental recognition items, such as certificates, medals, plaques, or graduation cords, to celebrate student achievement.

17. Can a High School Student Still Receive the Alabama Seal of Biliteracy After Graduation?

Yes. A student may receive the Alabama Seal of Biliteracy after graduation if they meet all required proficiency criteria after their official graduation date. This includes cases where assessment results (such as AP or IB scores) are released in the summer following graduation.

18. Can a District Award the Alabama Seal of Biliteracy If It Is Not Part of the Program?

No. Only districts that are officially participating in the Alabama Seal of Biliteracy program are authorized to award the Seal. Participation ensures that all state-established requirements are followed, including consistent proficiency standards, appropriate documentation, and accurate reporting through PowerSchool or the approved reporting process.

d. Assessments

19. Can ASL and Latin Students Apply for the Alabama Seal of Biliteracy?

Yes. Due to the unique linguistic characteristics of certain languages, appropriate accommodations and alternative assessment approaches may be used when all three ACTFL modes of communication (interpretive, interpersonal, and presentational) cannot be assessed in the traditional manner.

The Alabama State Department of Education reserves the right to approve alternative assessments that align with the intent and rigor of the Alabama Seal of Biliteracy. In cases where a language does not include all modalities (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) or certain modes are not applicable, students will demonstrate proficiency through the communicative modes appropriate to that language.

Examples include:

- **Latin and Classical Greek:**
Assessment typically emphasizes **interpretive reading and presentational writing**, as these modes of language are not used for spoken interpersonal communication in modern contexts.
- **American Sign Language (ASL):**
Assessment focuses on **interpersonal signed communication and presentational**



signing, including the ability to understand signed discourse (e.g., interpreting a signed lecture) and respond appropriately through signing.

- **Native American Languages (where applicable):**
Assessment may include **interpersonal communication, interpretive listening, and presentational speaking**, as well as reading and writing when a standardized written system exists.

These flexible assessment approaches ensure that students in all eligible languages can demonstrate biliteracy in ways that reflect their language's structure and use.

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 of approved proficiency assessments and the required minimum scores or proficiency levels for eligibility. Students may use any approved assessment listed in the guidelines to demonstrate proficiency in the target language.

If a specific language or assessment is not included in the approved list, districts should contact alsb@alsde.edu for guidance and clarification regarding appropriate assessment options.

21. When Should We Start Assessing Eligible Students?

We strongly recommend assessing students as early as possible to allow adequate time for score reporting, review, and any necessary retesting. Ideally, administer assessments in the fall or early spring of the academic year.

Early testing allows students to receive results before submitting college applications and gives those who do not initially meet proficiency requirements time to retake assessments, if needed. Students who are on track for graduation may also indicate on college applications that they are **Seal of Biliteracy–eligible**.

22. Can a Student Take the World Language Assessment More Than Once?

Students may earn the Alabama Seal of Biliteracy in multiple languages when they meet all proficiency requirements for each language.

Students may take an approved world language assessment more than once, if necessary, to demonstrate the required proficiency level.

School officials and testing coordinators should establish a local testing schedule based on the approved assessment and the vendor's administration guidelines.

If the assessment vendor permits sectional retakes, students may retake only the specific sections in which they did not achieve a qualifying score of Intermediate Mid 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 assessments. However, the Alabama State Department of Education and Workforce encourages schools and districts to utilize local and federal funding sources to assist students who may not be able to afford assessment costs.

In addition, some assessment vendors may offer reduced pricing when districts or schools meet minimum volume requirements. Schools and districts may also consider forming regional consortia to share resources and coordinate testing, thereby increasing access for students pursuing the Alabama Seal of Biliteracy.

24. Are Accommodations Available for Students With IEPs or 504 Plans?

Yes. In accordance with state policy, any testing accommodations outlined in a student's IEP or Section 504 Plan and approved for use on Alabama statewide assessments must also be provided for approved world language proficiency assessments used for the Alabama Seal of Biliteracy.

25. Can a Student Test in a Language That Is Not Listed?

The Alabama Seal of Biliteracy guidelines include a table of approved proficiency assessments and the corresponding minimum scores or proficiency levels required for eligibility.

If a language or assessment is not on the approved list, please contact alsb@alsde.edu for guidance on eligibility and potential assessment options.

26. In What Ways Can I Recognize the Recipients?

Schools and districts are encouraged to recognize and celebrate the Seal of Biliteracy recipients through a variety of meaningful methods, including:

- School-, district-, or board-level awards ceremonies
- Official Alabama Seal of Biliteracy notation on student transcripts
- Presentation of an Alabama Seal of Biliteracy certificate
- Letters or notifications to parents/guardians
- Graduation cords, sashes, medallions, or other appropriate regalia
- Recognition in local newspapers or community publications
- Social media recognition, including Facebook posts through @Alabama World Languages & Seal of Biliteracy
- Formal recognition or notification to the local board of education
- Opportunities for Seal recipients to share their experiences with younger students and promote the value of biliteracy
- Recorded or video recognitions shared with school and district communities
- Recognition through school or district websites, newsletters, or other communication channels

These recognitions help highlight student achievement and promote the value of multilingualism within schools and communities.



PART VI. REFERENCES

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