

VISION

*Prepare students to become
21st Century global citizens
in a multilingual world.*

WHAT IS BILITERACY?

The ability to speak, read, and
write in two or more languages
at a proficient level

AWARD COMPONENTS

- Seal on Diploma
- Transcript notation

MODELS

School districts in the following
states already encourage and
award the Seal of Bilingual

California
Indiana
Illinois
Minnesota
New Mexico
New York
Louisiana
Texas
Washington
Florida (voluntary)
Oregon (voluntary)



Seal of Bilingual

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STATE OF ILLINOIS SEAL OF BILITERACY



A Vision for Our Students

A Recognition for
Eligible Graduating
High School Seniors

WHAT IS THE SEAL OF BILITERACY?

Developed by Californians Together in 2008, the Seal of Biliteracy is an award approved by the State Board of Education and given 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 Biliteracy is a statement of accomplishment for attaining competency in two or more languages and viewed as an asset when applying for college admission or employment. Participation by a school, school district or county is voluntary.

Goals

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

- Encourage students to develop and maintain biliteracy 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;
- Provide employers with a method of identifying people with biliteracy skills.

A VISION FOR OUR STUDENTS

Which states have already passed legislation incorporating the Seal of Biliteracy?

Nine states, including Illinois, have already incorporated legislation offering the Seal of Biliteracy in their school districts; 13 states are at the early stages or considering it. California reports that 30,000 graduates were awarded the Seal of Biliteracy at the end of the 2013-2014 school year. On August 27th, 2013, governor Quinn signed PA 98-0560, which provides for school districts to award the Seal of Biliteracy to qualifying students.

What languages, in addition to English, would qualify for Seal of Biliteracy status?

Individual school districts can apply for languages that have been identified through state approved assessments.

How would high school students qualify for the Seal of Biliteracy?

Students need to qualify in English and another language. The State Board of Education determines qualifications for proficiency in English. For other languages, the Illinois State Board of Education has identified criteria from existing sources.

What incentive towards attainment of the Seal of Biliteracy will be made available at other grade levels?

Participating school districts design “pathways” to the Seal of Biliteracy. Pathways may begin as early as preschool and continue at selected levels in elementary and high school.

BENEFITS

How does the state benefit from the Seal of

Biliteracy?

- Students throughout the state are encouraged to develop competency in both English and at least one other language.
- The State will have a system in place for certifying biliteracy.
- Universities will be able to identify students eligible for advanced language placement.
- Employers will find job candidates who are appropriate for positions requiring the biliteracy skills.
- The State will formally recognize value of both foreign and native language instruction in public schools and in our society.

How do Illinois youth personally benefit from the advantages of biliteracy?

- Language abilities contribute to cognitive development and problem solving skills.
- Opportunities become available in a wide range of social, educational, economic, political and global contexts.
- According to recent research, the ability to speak more than one language stave off memory loss in later years.