

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 to enhance 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 multiple cultures in a community.

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 assessment options.
3. Demonstrate proficiency in one of the approved World Languages assessments, or through a Portfolio Assessment when applicable.



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.

<p>Step 1. Apply for the program → Review this Overview and Guidelines. 1. Please complete your participation form, indicating your district's involvement in this program (<i>submit only once</i>).</p> <p>Note: To receive a webinar on the Alabama Seal of Biliteracy, please email: alsb@alsde.edu</p>	<p>Form #1 District Participation https://bit.ly/3SZ8QyV</p> 
<p>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)</p> <p>Note: You will get an email confirming ALSDE has accepted the documents.</p>	<p>Form #2: School Plan Documentation https://bit.ly/4dF1SbT</p> 
<p>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 Summary form#3. 5. Transcript notation in Power School 6. Informing families and students</p>	<p>Form #3 Summary Report https://bit.ly/43DYF7M</p> 
<p>Step 4: State recognition → Let's celebrate! 1. Share the date and details of the awards ceremony. 2. Send photos of your honored students. We'd love to feature and celebrate their achievements with you on our platforms!</p>	<p>Form #4 Award Ceremony https://bit.ly/4kAZcye</p> 

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish points of contact for the students, parents, and stakeholders. Use your interest survey resource to identify students who qualify. 	
Testing Stage	Oct-Dec	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fall Testing window (Allow retakes enough time for retakes) 	Note: Retakes are permitted for the domains that did not meet the criteria.
	Jan-Mar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. Please allow enough time to receive the scores before graduation.
Celebration Stage	Apr-May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete Form #3 to report the students receiving the Alabama Seal of Biliteracy. If you wish to give medals to your students, 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete Form #4 to invite an ALSDE representative to celebrate this outstanding achievement with you. Data will be entered into PowerSchool to designate the Seal of Biliteracy on student transcripts based on their results. 	Complete Form #4: Award ceremony
Reflection Stage	June-Aug	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enter the students who pass the AP/IB exams into PowerSchool as you receive the scores. Identify potential student candidates for the following year. 	

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



3. Language Proficiency Requirements

To earn the **Alabama Seal of Biliteracy**, students must meet English proficiency benchmarks and score at least intermediate-mid on an approved language assessment.

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	For non-native English speakers

World Language Proficiency Assessment Options Table					
Test	Source	Languages	Domains	Notes	Minimum Score
AP <i>Advance Placement® Language and Culture</i>	College Board	Chinese French German Italian Japanese Latin Spanish Language and Culture	Speaking Listening Reading Writing	Administered in Spring, results are back in July.	3
IB <i>International Baccalaureate</i>	International Baccalaureate	Classical Languages Modern Languages	Speaking Listening Reading Writing	IB Spanish Standard Level (SL)	4
AAPPL <i>ACTFL Assessment of Performance Toward Proficiency in Languages</i>	LTI®	Arabic Chinese French German Italian Japanese Korean Portuguese Russian Spanish	Speaking Listening Reading Writing	Computer-delivered	Intermediate Mid 3 Refer to the chart below for the composite score calculation
STAMP 4s <i>Standards-based Measurement of Proficiency</i>	AVANT®	Arabic, Korean, French, Mandarin, German, Polish, Hebrew, Portuguese, Hindi, Russian, Italian, Spanish, Japanese	Speaking Listening Reading Writing	Computer-delivered	Intermediate Mid 5 Use the composite score
CEFR	CEFR	Classical Languages	Speaking Listening	Computer-delivered	Level B1



<i>Common European Framework of Reference</i>		Modern Languages	Reading Writing		
<u>OPI/WPT</u> <i>ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) and ACTFL Writing Proficiency Test (WPT) for the Seal of Biliteracy</i>	LTI®	The OPI is available in over 100 languages.	Speaking Writing	Must pass both	<u>Intermediate Mid 3</u>
Other assessments to be considered for ALSDE approval are:					
<u>TOCFL</u> <i>The Test of Chinese as a Foreign Language</i>	TOCFL®	Mandarin	Speaking Listening Reading Writing	Computer-delivered	B1
<u>STAMP WS</u> <i>Language proficiency test for less commonly tested languages in Writing & Speaking</i>	AVANT®	The STAMP WS is available in over 37 languages: Filipino-Tagalog Persian-Farsi Pashto Persian-Farsi Swahili Turkish Ukrainian Urdu Vietnamese	Speaking Writing	Computer-delivered	<u>Intermediate Mid 5</u> Use the composite score
The school district may request an equivalent language assessment.				Contact the ALSDE at ALSB@alsde.edu	
Portfolio Assessment	Portfolio		Must have ALSDE pre-approval. Refer to Portfolio Rubric here		

Latin and American Sign Language Assessment Options Table

Test	Language Assessed	Domains	Minimum score
<u>SLPI - ASL</u> <i>Sign Language Proficiency Interview</i>	ASL	Functional ASL use in conversational contexts	Intermediate Plus
<u>ASPLI</u> <i>American Sign Language Interview</i>	ASL	Receptive & expressive signing (one-on-one interview)	Level 3
<u>ALIRA - ACTFL</u> <i>Latin Interpretive Reading Assessment</i>	Latin	Reading	Intermediate Mid 3
Other assessments to be considered for ALSDE approval are:			
<u>STAMP for ASL</u> <i>American Sign Language Interview</i>	ASL	Receptive & expressive (video and multiple-choice)	Level 3
<u>STAMP for LATIN</u> <i>Latin Interpretive Reading Assessment</i>	Latin	Reading	Intermediate Mid 3

Students taking the AP or IB language exams receive a single overall score based on multiple language modalities in all four areas: reading, writing, speaking, and listening, with no separate scores for each skill.



a) Policy Update for Implementation

- STAMP Assessment
 - A composite score will now be accepted.
 - Decimals will be rounded to the nearest whole number.
 - Automatic disqualification: Any modality with a 0, 1, or unscorable score.
- AAPPL Assessment
 - Numerical values will be assigned to each proficiency score.
 - Automatic disqualification: Any modality with a 0, 1, or unscorable score.

b) Numerical Values for Proficiency Ratings

- Numerical scores will be assigned to AAPPL. Schools must calculate the average score across all tested modalities for that particular language, including speaking, writing, listening, and reading.
- The table below displays the numerical scores assigned to each proficiency rating. The composite (average) score determines whether the student meets the criteria.
- While the average score will decide the award, specific scores automatically disqualify students from the Alabama Seal of Biliteracy.
- ***If any domain is rated as 0, 1, or non-ratable, the student will not qualify for the Alabama Seal of Biliteracy, even if the average score exceeds Intermediate Mid (5).***

c) AAPPL Test Composite Score Numerical Values

Proficiency Levels	AAPPL Scores Key	Numerical Value assigned
Advance Low	A-1	7
Intermediate High	I-5	6
Intermediate Mid	I-4, I-3, I-2	5
Intermediate Low	I-1	4
Novice High	N-4	3
Novice Mid	N-3, N-2	2
Novice Low	N-1	1



d) AAPPL Test Composite Scores Calculation Examples

Examples	Listening	Reading	Speaking	Writing	Total	Divided by 4 domains	Qualify for the Seal >4.5
Student A	6 (IH)	6 (IH)	2 (NM)	2 (NM)	16	4.00	no
Student B	5 (IM)	6 (IH)	2 (NM)	4 (IL)	17	4.25	no
Student C	6 (IH)	7 (AL)	2 (NM)	3 (NM)	18	4.5	yes
Student D	5 (IM)	6 (IH)	4 (IL)	5 (IM)	20	5	yes
Student E	1 (NL)	5 (IM)	4 (IL)	3 (NH)	n/a	n/a	no
Student F	5 (IM)	4 (IL)	3 (NH)	0	n/a	n/a	no

Effective Date

The updated method for interpreting assessment ratings will apply to all students graduating on or after August 1, 2025, regardless of the assessment's date.

e) Additional Guidance

- If students receive a **zero or unscorable** in any modality, they should request the specific reason (e.g., “inaudible voice” or technical error). When appropriate, reassessing the affected part of the exam is recommended.
- Assigned numerical values provide a consistent and transparent method for determining award eligibility.
- When reviewing results with students, use the actual proficiency levels (e.g., Intermediate Low, Mid, High) and their descriptors to guide feedback and next steps.



4. Portafolio Rubric

a) Interpersonal Listening

Written summary (150- 200 words) from an authentic audio or video at least one minute long. The source must be included.

Intermediate-Mid Interpersonal Listening Rubric				
	Excellent	Strong	Fair	Poor
Task Completion: How well do you address the specifics of the assignment?	Approach the maximum requirement. Is creative with the assignment	At least a minimum time thoroughly addresses the assignment	At least the minimum time, appropriately addresses the assignment	Less than the minimum time inappropriately addresses the assignment
Language Function: How much and how well are you expressing yourself?	Consistently narrates or describes in appropriate time frames	Attempts to narrate and describe in proper time frames	Expresses your meaning in a basic way	Uses mostly memorized language with some attempts to create
Text Type: What's the quality of the written text, and how well is it organized?	Uses connected sentences and paragraphs like discourse	Uses mostly connected sentences and some paragraph-like discourse	Uses strings of sentences and some complex sentences (dependent clauses)	Uses simple sentences and strings of sentences
Impact How well do you engage your audience and organize your message?	Presents information clearly, includes originality, rich details, and an unexpected feature to capture the interest and attention of the audience	Presents information clearly, includes originality, rich details, visuals, and/or organization to capture the interest and attention of the audience	Presents information clearly, makes some effort to maintain the audience's attention through visuals, organization, and/or details	Presents information in an unclear or unorganized manner, makes minimal to no effort to maintain the audience's attention
Language Control: How accurate and appropriate are your vocabulary, spelling, grammar, and formatting?	Accurately & appropriately employs all four: Vocabulary, Grammar, Pronunciation, and Pace.	Accurately & appropriately employs three: Vocabulary, Grammar, Pronunciation, and Pace.	Accurately & appropriately employs two: Vocabulary, Grammar, Pronunciation, and Pacing.	Accurately & appropriately employs one or none: Vocabulary, Grammar, Pronunciation, Pace.



b) Presentational Speaking

Recorded presentation on any academic topic of interest (4-5 minutes)

Intermediate-Mid Presentational Speaking Rubric				
	Excellent	Strong	Fair	Poor
Presentation of an academic topic How well do you conduct the presentation and address its objective?	Clearly and appropriately accomplishes all four: 1. Greets the audience and introduces him/herself 2. Consistently uses an appropriate register 3. Achieves objective of presentation(s) 4. Concludes presentation appropriately	Clearly and appropriately accomplishes three: 1. Greets the audience and introduces him/herself 2. Consistently uses an appropriate register 3. Achieves objective of presentation(s) 4. Concludes presentation appropriately	Clearly and appropriately accomplishes two: 1. Greets the audience and introduces him/herself 2. Consistently uses an appropriate register 3. Achieves objective of presentation(s) 4. Concludes presentation appropriately	Clearly and appropriately accomplishes one or none: 1. Greets the audience and introduces him/herself 2. Consistently uses an appropriate register 3. Achieves objective of presentation(s) 4. Concludes presentation appropriately
Language Function How well do you speak spontaneously?	Speaks impromptu and consistently narrates or describes in appropriate time frames, maintaining the academic topic of discussion	Speaks impromptu and attempts to narrate and describe in proper time frames, maintaining the academic topic of discussion	Speaks impromptu and expresses their meaning in a basic way, maintaining the academic topic of discussion	Uses mostly memorized language with some attempts to create a narrative, attempting to preserve the academic topic of discussion
Text Type How much do you speak, and how well is it organized?	Uses connected sentences and paragraphs like discourse	Uses mostly connected sentences and some paragraph-like discourse	Uses strings of sentences and some complex sentences (dependent clauses)	Uses simple sentences and strings of sentences
Communication Strategies How well does the presentation engage the audience? How well do you negotiate meaning?	Maintains the topic of the presentation, clarifies with rephrasing or circumlocution	Presents with ease, clarifies by paraphrasing.	The presentation contains gaps that may indicate a lack of vocabulary or command at the required level of proficiency	The presentation seems memorized. The presentation includes gaps that interfere with the communication of the message
Language Control How accurate and appropriate are your vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and pace of speaking?	Accurately & appropriately employs all four: Vocabulary, Grammar, Pronunciation, and Pace.	Accurately & appropriately employs three: Vocabulary, Grammar, Pronunciation, and Pace.	Accurately & appropriately employs two: Vocabulary, Grammar, Pronunciation, and Pace.	Accurately & appropriately employs one or none: Vocabulary, Grammar, Pronunciation, Pace.



c) Interpersonal Communication

Recorded interview (2-3 minutes) of a conversation with a native speaker (i.e., family members).
Topic: What are your future goals, and how can bilingualism benefit you?

Intermediate-Mid Interpersonal Communication Rubric				
	Excellent	Strong	Fair	Poor
Conversation Basics: How well do you conduct the conversation and address its objective?	Clearly and appropriately accomplishes all four: Greets partner, Consistently uses an appropriate register, Achieves their aim (s), Concludes the conversation appropriately	Clearly and appropriately accomplishes three: Greets partner, Consistently uses an appropriate register, Achieves their aim (s), and Concludes the conversation appropriately	Clearly and appropriately accomplishes two: Greets partner, Consistently uses an appropriate register, Achieves their aim (s), Concludes the conversation appropriately	Clearly and appropriately accomplishes one or more of the following: Greets partner, Consistently uses an appropriate register, Achieves their aim (s), Concludes the conversation appropriately
Language Function: How well do you speak spontaneously?	Speaks impromptu and consistently narrates or describes in appropriate time frames	Speaks impromptu and attempts to narrate and describe in a proper time frame	Speaks impromptu and expresses their meaning in a basic way	Uses mostly memorized language with some attempts to create
Text Type: How much do you speak, and how well is it organized?	Uses connected sentences and paragraphs like discourse	Uses mostly connected sentences and some paragraph-like discourse	Uses strings of sentences and some complex sentences (dependent clauses)	Uses simple sentences and strings of sentences
Communication Strategies: How well do you interact with your partner? How well do you negotiate meaning?	Maintains the conversation. Clarifies with rephrasing or circumlocution	Converses with ease, clarifies by paraphrasing	Responds to direct questions, asks a few appropriate questions, and clarifies by restating	Responds to basic direct questions, asks a few formulaic questions, and clarifies by repeating or substituting different words
Language Control: How accurate and appropriate are your vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and pace of speaking?	Accurately & appropriately employs all four: Vocabulary, Grammar, Pronunciation, and Pace.	Accurately & appropriately employs three: Vocabulary, Grammar, Pronunciation, and Pace.	Accurately & appropriately employs two: Vocabulary, Grammar, Pronunciation, and Pace.	Accurately & appropriately employs one or none: Vocabulary, Grammar, Pronunciation, Pace.



d) Presentational Reading/Writing

Written summary (200-300 words) of a current event taken from an authentic, written news article from the home country.

Intermediate-Mid Presentational Writing Rubric				
	Excellent	Strong	Fair	Poor
Task Completion: How well do you address the specifics of the assignment?	Approach the maximum word count creatively with the assignment	At least a minimum word count, thoroughly addresses the assignment	At least a minimum word count appropriately addresses the assignment	Less than minimum word count. Inappropriately addresses the assignment
Language Function: How much and how well are you expressing yourself?	Consistently narrates or describes in appropriate time frames	Attempts to narrate and describe in proper time frames	Expresses their meaning in a basic way	Uses mostly memorized language with some attempts to create
Text Type: How much do you speak, and how well is it organized?	Uses connected sentences and paragraphs like discourse	Uses mostly connected sentences and some paragraph-like discourse	Uses strings of sentences and some complex sentences (dependent clauses)	Uses simple sentences and strings of sentences
Impact: How well do you engage your audience and organize your message?	Presents information clearly, including originality, rich details, and an unexpected feature to capture the interest and attention of the audience	Presents information clearly, includes originality, rich details, visuals, and/or organization to capture the interest and attention of the audience	Presents information clearly, makes some effort to maintain the audience's attention through visuals, organization, and/or details	Presents information in an unclear or unorganized manner, makes minimal to no effort to maintain the audience's attention
Language Control: How accurate and appropriate are your vocabulary, spelling, grammar, and formatting?	Accurately & appropriately employs all four: Vocabulary, Spelling, Grammar, Formatting.	Accurately & appropriately employs three: Vocabulary, Spelling, Grammar, and Formatting.	Accurately & appropriately employs two: Vocabulary, Spelling, Grammar, and Formatting.	Accurately & appropriately employs one or more: Vocabulary, Spelling, Grammar, Formatting.



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 in our records 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]."

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

[Printable Template Link](#)



3. Alabama Seal of Biliteracy Student of the Year

a) School Selection Process [Nomination Form](#)

1. Nomination Process: Schools may allow students to apply, or teachers/counselors may nominate students.
2. Review Committee: A selection committee (e.g., world language teachers, counselors, administrators) evaluates nominees using a rubric.
3. Final Selection: The highest-scoring student is chosen as the school's **Alabama Seal of Biliteracy** Student of the Year. In the case of a tie, an interview or committee discussion can determine the final choice.

b) 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.

c) Criteria #1 Language Proficiency & Academic Achievement

- Successfully earned the **Alabama Seal of Biliteracy** by meeting all proficiency requirements in a world language.
- Demonstrates mid proficiency in all assessed language skills (reading, writing, listening, speaking).
- Strong academic record, particularly in world language courses and related fields.

d) Criteria #2 Leadership & Advocacy in Language Learning

- Has taken the initiative to promote language learning and multilingualism in their school or community.
- Serves as a mentor, tutor, or role model for other language learners.
- Demonstrates leadership in language-related organizations, such as Language Clubs, Language Honor Societies, or cultural exchange programs.

e) Criteria #3 Cross-Cultural Engagement & Community Service

- Participates in cultural exchange programs, study abroad experiences, or heritage language initiatives.
- Engages in volunteer work that promotes linguistic and cultural diversity, such as working with immigrant/refugee communities, translation services, or multicultural events.
- Shows a commitment to cross-cultural understanding and global citizenship.

f) Criteria #4 Personal Statement or Reflection

- The student submits a short personal statement (or video essay) on the impact of bilingualism in their life and future aspirations.
- The statement should address:
 - o How earning the **Alabama Seal of Biliteracy** has influenced their academic and personal growth.
 - o How do they plan to use their language skills in college, career, or community service?
 - o Their passion for language learning and intercultural understanding.

g) Criteria #5 Teacher/Administrator Recommendation Letter

- A teacher, counselor, or administrator provides a recommendation letter describing why the student is an exceptional representative of the **Alabama Seal of Biliteracy**.
- The recommendation should highlight the student's language skills, leadership, commitment to multilingualism, and cultural contributions.



● **Criteria #1 Seal of Biliteracy Achievement Rubric**

Instructions: Each student is evaluated based on the following criteria. Each category is scored on a **1-5 scale** (1 = Needs Improvement, 5 = Outstanding). The highest possible score is **25 points**.

Category	1 - Needs Improvement	2 - Developing	3 - Proficient	4 - Advanced	5 - 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.	/5
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.	/5
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.	/5
Personal Statement or Reflection	Weak or missing statement with little insight.	The statement lacks depth and personal connection to language learning.	Clear reflection on the language learning experience and its importance.	Strong reflection with personal insight on bilingualism's impact.	Exceptional statement with deep personal reflection and future aspirations.	/5
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.	/5

Total Score: ____ / 25

Selection Notes: 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 or committee discussion may decide the final selection.



● **Criteria #2 Seal of Biliteracy Distinction Evaluation Rubric**

Criteria	Excellent (10 pts)	Proficient (7-9 pts)	Developing (4-6 pts)	Emerging (1-3 pts)	Score
Language Proficiency (Demonstrates high-level proficiency in English & another language)	Earned Seal of Biliteracy with Advanced-Low or higher proficiency	Earned Seal with Intermediate-High proficiency	Earned Seal with Intermediate-Mid proficiency	Earned Seal with Intermediate-Low or below	/10
Academic Excellence (Overall academic achievement, especially in language studies)	Maintains a GPA of 3.8+ , excels in language coursework	Maintains a GPA of 3.5+ , strong performance in language coursework	Maintains a GPA of 3.0+ , meets expectations in language studies	GPA below 3.0 , struggles in language studies	/10
Leadership & Advocacy (Promotes bilingualism, cultural awareness, or language learning)	Actively leads or organizes language-related activities (e.g., club, tutoring, events)	Participates in language-related events and supports peers	Occasionally engages in language activities, but not consistently	Limited involvement in language-related activities	/10
Cultural Engagement (Demonstrates appreciation and understanding of diverse cultures)	Substantial participation in multicultural events, community service, or cultural exchanges	Engages in cultural activities and shows appreciation for diverse perspectives	Displays some interest in cultural learning, but minimal involvement	Little to no participation in cultural or community activities	/10
Impact & Communication (Effectively communicates how biliteracy benefits personal & professional goals)	Clearly articulates the effects of bilingualism through an essay, speech, or interview.	Express the benefits of bilingualism with some personal reflection	Provides a general response but lacks strong personal insight	Struggles to articulate the importance of bilingualism	/10

Total Score: _____ / 50

Selection Process: The student with the highest total score will be selected as the **Alabama Seal of Biliteracy Student of the Year**. Teacher recommendations and an interview may be used as tiebreakers in the event of a tie.



● **Criteria #3 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 (5 pts)	Proficient (4 pts)	Developing (3 pts)	Emerging (1-2 pts)	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 lacks clear structure or transitions.	The essay lacks clear organization, making it difficult to follow.	/5
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.	/5
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.	/5
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.	/5
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.	/5

Total Score: ____ / 25



Criteria	Excellent (5 pts)	Proficient (4 pts)	Developing (3 pts)	Emerging (1-2 pts)	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.	/5
Depth of Reflection (Insight into how the Seal of Biliteracy impacted their academic journey and personal growth)	Provides deep, thoughtful reflection on the impact of the Seal with specific, meaningful examples.	Provides a solid reflection of the effects of the Seal, but with less detail or fewer examples.	General reflection with a few particular examples or connections to personal growth.	Lacks reflection on how the Seal impacted their academic journey or personal growth.	/5
Memorable Experience (Shares a significant experience where bilingual skills made a difference)	Shares a robust, specific, and relevant expertise demonstrating the impact of bilingual skills.	Shares a relevant experience with some detail, but it lacks the depth or impact of an ideal example.	Shares a general or less impactful experience that doesn't fully demonstrate the value of bilingual skills.	No significant experience was shared, and the example is vague and unrelated to bilingual skills.	/5
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.	/5
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.	Video is engaging and well-organized but may lack creative elements or visual/auditory impact.	Video is engaging but lacks creativity or has technical issues.	Video is unengaging or lacks creativity and effort in presentation.	/5
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 that hinder understanding.	/5

Total Score: ____ / 30



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 set up the required procedures can eligible students apply and earn the Seal based on 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 the skill with which a person can use the 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 that language is a native language, a heritage language, or a language learned in school or any other setting. 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 level of proficiency required for English and the level necessary for one or more different 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 in their senior year.
- 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.
- Ensure the Seal will be included on the high school transcript, as this is the credential that colleges, universities, and future employers consider.
- Ensure that students awarded the Seal are recognized prominently 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, cognitive disabilities, 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 resources and means to make the assessments for the Seal of Biliteracy 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 maintaining records of qualifications for 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. 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, for instance, 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 languages: _____.**" 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.

d) Assessments

18. 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



19. 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.

20. When should we test students?

Testing seniors as early as possible is beneficial, allowing time for any necessary retakes. Ideally, this should occur by late February or early March. The state committee suggests testing juniors in March of their junior year; this way, they will have sufficient time to receive results before submitting college applications if they decide to retest in June or even late September. Students on track to graduate can inform colleges that they are “*Seal of Biliteracy eligible.*” AP scores are only helpful for awarding the Seal if the students enrolled are juniors. Seniors in AP and IB courses may not have enough scores to qualify for the Seal. Many districts utilize the AAPPL or STAMP for seniors to ensure student results arrive on time to determine the award.

21. 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 yearly, while others may be provided multiple times yearly. 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 Intermediate High or higher score.

22. 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 utilize local and federal funding sources to assist students who cannot afford the cost of an assessment. 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**.

23. 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.



24. 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 inquiries about languages not included in the list.

25. 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 ours Twitter: [@alsobiliteracy](#)
- Announcement on the website or electronic billboard
- 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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