What is the Seal of Biliteracy?

The Seal of Biliteracy is an award given by a school, school district, county office of education, or state in recognition of students who have studied and attained proficiency in two or more languages by high school graduation. Our vision is to help students recognize the valued of their academic success and see the tangible benefits of being bilingual. The Seal of Biliteracy takes the form of a gold seal that appears on the transcript or diploma of the graduating senior and is a statement of accomplishment for future employers and for college admissions.

Why Apply for the State Seal of Biliteracy?

Research has demonstrated that the students who have received a Seal of Biliteracy are perceived as more desirable to employers across all industries surveyed. Sixty-six percent of employers responded that they would prefer a bilingual employee to a monolingual English speaker and that students who earned a seal would have an advantage in the hiring process. Colleges and university have also recognized the seal when making admissions decisions and even when awarding credit for foreign language coursework.

How do students apply for the California State Seal of Biliteracy?

Schools will not be identifying students who qualify for this award. Students interested in applying should contact their school counseling office to pick up an application. Applications are also available for download from your school's website. Students will be responsible for applying for and meeting the required application deadline they are interested. Completed applications, including all verification documents must be turned into your school's counseling office by **March 29, 2019**. Incomplete applications or applications turned in after the deadline will not be considered.

Requirements

Complete all English Language Arts requirements for graduation with an overall cumulative GPA of 2.0 or above in those classes; AND

Pass the 11th grade Smarter Balanced Summative Assessment with a score of "Standard Met" or "Standard Exceeded"; AND

Show proficiency in one or more languages other than English through ONE of the following methods:

TEST

* Passing a world language Advanced Placement exam with a score of 3 or higher; **OR**
* Passing a SAT II Subject test for an additional language with a score of 600 or higher

COURSEWORK

* Complete a four-year high school course of study in a world language with an overall cumulative grade point average of 3.0 or above; **AND**
    o Pass SMUSD Language Proficiency Test
* Complete the equivalent of a four-year course of study in a world language at a community college or university level with an overall cumulative grade point average of 3.0 or above; **AND**
    o Pass SMUSD Language Proficiency Test

** If you are currently identified as an English Language Learner, in addition to the above criteria you must:

Attain Early Advanced or Advanced proficiency level overall on the California English Language Development Test (CELDT); **OR**
Attain a level demonstrating English language proficiency on the English Language Proficiency Assessments for California (ELPAC)

Frequently Asked Questions

How is the California State Seal of Biliteracy awarded?

A gold, embossed seal will be placed on the student's diploma and it is referenced on the transcript.

Is there a cost to students for the Seal?

No fee is charged to students or schools who participate in the California State Seal of Biliteracy program.

Do language classes taken in middle school count for the California State Seal of Biliteracy?

Classes receiving high school credit count towards the requirements for the California State Seal of Biliteracy. At this time, Spanish I courses taken at an SMUSD middle school are placed on the high school transcript and count toward the requirement.

Do classes taken outside of SMUSD count for demonstrating proficiency in another language?

Pre-approved language classes taken at the college/university level will be honored provided students receive high school credit for the classes, meet the four-year equivalency requirement, and pass the SMUSD Language Proficiency Test. Students are responsible for providing the supporting documents.

I am currently enrolled in my fourth year of a language, and I won't have completed the course before the applications are due.

If you meet all other eligibility criteria and are currently enrolled in the course to meet the language proficiency requirement, you can still submit your application by the published due date. Your application will be identified as "conditionally accepted" until final grades are posted in June. As long as you finish the course with the appropriate grades, you can expect to receive your Seal of Biliteracy with your diploma.

What if I am taking the SAT or AP exam for the language this spring? Can I still apply?

First, check to see if you meet the eligibility criteria in other ways (e.g. through coursework). If not, you can still submit your application by the published due date. Your application will be identified as "conditionally accepted" and you will receive your diploma without a Seal until you submit your exam score report. School offices are closed for the summer, so you will need to wait until August to submit your exam report and receive your Seal of Biliteracy. You must submit your exam score report no later than August 15 or your application will be considered incomplete and you will not receive a Seal.

What if I took AP Spanish my junior year and did not take the test (or did not pass)? Do I qualify?

If the student has taken four years of a language (inclusive of middle school), attained an overall GPA of 3.0 in the language, and passed the SMUSD Language Proficiency Test, he or should would meet the eligibility requirement in junior year. An application must be submitted in their senior year.

I started my freshman year in ELD classes. I am now a senior in English 12. Do I meet the requirements for completing the graduation requirements for English?

If a student has met all requirements for graduation, completed 40 English credits with an overall grade point average of 2.0 or higher, and scored "Standard Met" or "Standard Exceeded" on the Smarter Balanced Summative Assessment, and demonstrated proficiency on the CELDT or ELPAC (if classified as an English Learner), the student would meet the requirements demonstrating proficiency in the English language.

Does the California State Seal of Biliteracy fulfill the foreign language requirement for UC or CSU schools?

The California State Seal of Biliteracy does not fulfill the foreign language requirements for UC or CSU schools.

I am reclassified as Fluent English Proficient. Do I meet the requirements for demonstrating proficiency in the English Language?

A student who is classified as RFEP must still meet all requirements for graduation, complete 40 English credits with an overall grade point average of 2.0 or higher and score "Standard Met" or "Standard Exceeded" on the Smarter Balanced Summative Assessment. A student classified as RFEP does not need CELDT/ELPAC scores.

I am fluent in a language other than English, but did not take language classes in high school. Can I qualify?

Students must demonstrate language proficiency through testing (either an Advanced Placement or SAT Subject Test) or through coursework (4-year equivalency and the SMUSD Language Proficiency Test). If your language proficiency cannot be assessed through one of these means, there is not currently a way in which a student is able to demonstrate proficiency and earn the seal.

SAN MARCOS
UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
engaging students... inspiring futures

THE CALIFORNIA STATE SEAL OF BILITERACY FOR SMUSD SENIORS
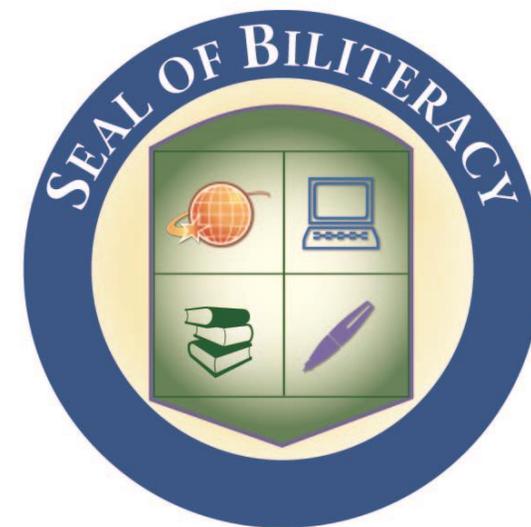
The California State Seal of Biliteracy is recognition by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction of graduating high school students who have attained a high level of proficiency in speaking, reading, and writing in one or more languages in addition to English.