

**ADMINISTRATIVE CIRCULAR NO. 44**

Office of Teaching and Learning

**SAN DIEGO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT**

- Date:** January 14, 2016
- To:** Area Superintendents, Principals, Vice Principals, Head Counselors, Division and Department Heads, World Language Teachers 9-12 Grade
- Subject:** SEAL OF BILITERACY AWARD FOR STUDENTS GRADUATING IN SPRING/SUMMER OF 2016
- Departments and/or Persons Concerned:** Area Superintendents, Principals, Vice Principals, Head Counselors, Division and Department Heads, World Language Teachers 9-12 Grade, Students in World Language Courses 9-12 Grade
- Due Date:** Submit all verification documents to the Office of Language Acquisition by Friday, March 25, 2016
- Reference:**
1. Resolution establishing the SDUSD Seal of Biliteracy for Eligible 12<sup>th</sup> Grade Seniors, approved May 10, 2011
  2. AB 815 Brownley, State Seal of Biliteracy, approved October 8, 2011
- Action Requested:**
1. Ensure all students currently enrolled in World Language Courses in grade 9–12 receive the information on the Seal of Biliteracy.
  2. Ensure that all 12th grade students who have taken or are currently enrolled in World Language courses receive the application form for the Seal of Biliteracy.
  3. Ensure that school counselors work with students to review the application and determine eligibility for receiving the Seal of Biliteracy Award.
- Attachments:**
- A. Application for Seniors to Receive the Seal of Biliteracy Upon Graduation, Spring/Summer 2016
  - B. Frequently Asked Questions

**Brief Explanation:**

The District Seal of Biliteracy is an award granted to high school seniors upon graduation certifying attainment of mastery in two or more languages. The Seal of Biliteracy is directly linked to the Language Learning Policy adopted by the San Diego Unified School District Board of Trustees in August of 2009, which recognizes that “in addition to being academically prepared and fully proficient in English, all students benefit from being proficient in another language”. In addition, attainment of the Seal of Biliteracy by graduating seniors clearly advances tenets of the District’s Vision 2020 plan for “preparing our students for the competitive global economy they will face in the years ahead” and the Vision 2020 goal to ensure that “students from all backgrounds in our district develop the ability to communicate in two languages.” Qualifying students graduating in the spring/summer of 2016 will receive the District Seal of Biliteracy.

The State Seal of Biliteracy, AB 815, was signed by the governor and enacted into the California Education Code on October 8, 2011. As more information becomes available from the California Department of Education, revisions and alignment to the district criteria for the Seal of Biliteracy may be warranted.

**Eligibility Criteria:**

The student application form explains the specific criteria that must be met and documented in order for students to fulfill the requirements for the Seal of Biliteracy.

Recognizing that unique situations may arise with regard to student eligibility, please refer to Attachment 2, **Frequently Asked Questions**. For additional information or questions, contact Sandra Cephas or Michael McVeigh in the Office of Language Acquisition, (619) 725-7264.

Sandra Cephas  
Director  
Office of Language Acquisition

APPROVED:



Jim Solo  
Executive Director  
Office of Leadership and Learning

Attachments (2)

**Application for Seniors to Receive the Seal of Biliteracy  
Upon Graduation, Spring/Summer 2016  
Application Submission Window: March 14 – 25, 2016**

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Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Student I.D. \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_

Counselor: \_\_\_\_\_

**I wish to receive the Seal of Biliteracy on my high school diploma.**

\_\_\_\_\_ A copy of the student's current transcript is attached to this application form.

**I have met the following eligibility requirements:**

\_\_\_\_\_ Successful completion of all San Diego Unified A-G high school graduation requirements.

AND **ONE** of the following World Language requirements:

\_\_\_\_\_ **OPTION 1:**

Successful completion of three to four years of instruction in the same world language, with an overall grade point average of 3.0 or higher in all world language course work. The course work must include one of the following options:

- An **Honors 7-8** course. Student must score at **Proficient** or higher on the district-developed End of Course exam. *Verified by copy of current transcript and EOC exam score.*
- An upper level **IB** course. Students must score 4 or higher on the IB exam, as determined by IB testing agency (an upper level IB course can be either an IBSL or an IBHL). *Verified by notification letter from an IB Testing Agency.*

\_\_\_\_\_ **OPTION 2:**

A score of "3" or higher on the **Advanced Placement (AP)** exam for world language.

- **NOTE:** *Students who choose to take an AP course BUT choose not to take the AP exam, will need to pass the Honors 7-8 exam with a score of Proficient or higher.*
- Verified by notification letter from the College Board.

\_\_\_\_\_ **OPTION 3:**

A passing score (varies by language) on the **SAT World Language Subject Test**. *Verified by notification letter from the College Board.*

\_\_\_\_\_ **OPTION 4:**

A score of proficient or higher on a district approved **LOTE (Language Other Than English)** exam (varies by language). *Verified by copy of current transcript and/or LOTE Proficiency Certification.*

**NOTE:** *If you are currently enrolled in a 7-8 Honors, AP, or IB course and have not yet taken the corresponding exam, please submit the application and write "pending exam results" on the line next to Option 1 or 2. Seals will be issued as soon as exam results are submitted to the Office of Language Acquisition for verification.*

Please return this application form, transcript, AND all other verification documents to your school counselor **no later than March 25, 2016**. Applications submitted without all necessary documentation (or "pending" note as needed) will be returned to school sites.

<b>COUNSELOR'S VERIFICATION</b>	
<b>The candidate has:</b>	
_____	Successfully completed all SDUSD A-G high school graduation requirements <b>AND</b> one of the above world language requirements.
_____	Maintained an overall grade point average of 3.0 or higher in all world language courses.
_____	Attached a copy of a current transcript to this form.
Student's Signature: _____	
Counselor's Signature: _____	
Date: _____	
Please forward to Office of Language Acquisition, Ed Center, Room 2009	
Attention: Mike McVeigh, World Language Resource Teacher	
<b>OLA USE ONLY</b>	
_____	Approved for the Seal of Biliteracy Award
_____	Not approved due to the following: _____
_____	
_____	
District Program Coordinator Signature: _____ Date: _____	

## **Seal of Biliteracy Award *Frequently Asked Questions***

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### ***What is the “Seal of Biliteracy”?***

- Students will have a gold embossed sticker with the Seal of Biliteracy insignia affixed to their diploma.

### ***Is there a cost?***

- There is no cost incurred by students for the Seal of Biliteracy Award.

### ***Does a student’s GPA matter?***

- Students must maintain a minimum overall grade point average of 2.0 in order to graduate. Additionally, the student’s cumulative grade point average in world languages must be 3.0 or higher. (Reference: AB 815, Article 6, section 1B)

### ***Do English learners need to be re-designated as English proficient speakers?***

- Yes, evidence of English language proficiency is one of the requirements. Students must attain the early advanced proficiency level on the California English Language Development Test (CELDT). Schools must make every effort to ensure that the re-designation process is completed before the March 24, 2016 deadline. (Reference AB 815, Article 6, section 1D.b)

### ***If students choose to meet one of the eligibility requirements by taking an AP, SAT, or IB exam, when should these exams be taken?***

- Students ideally will meet these options by the end of their junior year.
- *Students taking an AP exam in the spring of their senior year may come to the Office of Language Acquisition with a copy of the exam results and have the Seal of Biliteracy placed on their diploma if all requirements have been met.*

### ***What about students who take an AP world language course but choose not to take the AP exam?***

- Students who choose to take an AP course BUT choose not to take the AP exam, will need to pass the Honors 7-8 exam with a score of Proficient or higher.
- This requirement does not apply to students who choose not to apply for the Seal of Biliteracy.

***What about students who come to school proficient in a language other than English?***

- Interested candidates must meet the eligibility requirement for demonstrating proficiency in English.
- The Office of Language Acquisition works with the district's Research and Accountability office to generate a list of students who indicate a home language other than English. We then work with personnel at the school site to certify proficiency in a language other than English through one of the options approved by the UC/CSU system.
- Students have the option of enrolling in a district world language course.

***Does a student's current world language teacher need to approve the application?***

- The student's world language teacher does not need to approve the application. However, it is expected that the world language teachers will monitor students' progress and provide appropriate supports and interventions to ensure that the student maintains an overall grade point average of 3.0 or higher in world language coursework.

***What about summer graduates?***

- Summer graduates who fulfill the Seal of Biliteracy requirements and submit the application by March 24, 2016 are eligible to receive this award, pending summer school grade results.

***What about students who choose to take world language courses through the district accredited Independent World Language Schools (IWLS)?***

- Students follow existing district procedures to ensure that the courses are submitted and posted on high school transcripts.
- Students enrolled in an IWLS offering AP courses should follow Option 2.

If you have additional questions or need additional information, please contact:  
Michael McVeigh, World Language Resource Teacher: [mmcveigh@sandi.net](mailto:mmcveigh@sandi.net)