

FACT SHEET



Kansas State Seal of Biliteracy

FOR SCHOOL DISTRICTS, PARENTS, AND STUDENTS

Knowledge of more than one language and culture is advantageous for all students ... Bilingualism is an individual and societal asset.

-TESOL International Association, 2006

Purpose

The Kansas Seal of Biliteracy is awarded to a student upon graduation by the Kansas State Department of Education and a local school district to recognize any student who has attained proficiency in English and one or more other world languages. The recognition for attaining biliteracy becomes part of a student's high school transcript. The Seal of Biliteracy is a statement of accomplishment that recognizes a student's readiness for career, college, and engagement as a global citizen.

Background

The majority of States in the U.S. and the District of Columbia now offer a Seal of Biliteracy. The initiative originated in California schools in 2008 and the state officially adopted the Seal of Biliteracy in 2011. In 2015 four national organizations collaborated to create national guidelines for the Seal of Biliteracy: the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL), the National Association of Bilingual Education (NABE), the National Council of State Supervisors for Languages (NCSSFL), and TESOL

International Association. An organization offering a Global Seal of Biliteracy has also formed to serve graduates unaffiliated with adopting states, students who have already graduated, and students graduating from private schools. To ensure consistency in the significance of this recognition, the KSDE Seal of Biliteracy Advisory Council recommends following these national guidelines and meets annually to provide appropriate updates and guidance for implementation in Kansas.

Definition of Terms

"Biliteracy" refers to having a functional level of proficiency for the Silver award and a working level of proficiency for the Gold award in two or more languages. The level of proficiency includes listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. The Seal of Biliteracy is not an actual seal. Kansas does not affix seals or other endorsements to high school transcripts. School districts are responsible for ensuring that the Seal of

Biliteracy and the languages in which the student was certified are recorded on a student's high school transcript. The student also receives a certificate of recognition from the Kansas State Department of Education.





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Qualifications

In order to be eligible for the Seal of Bilingualism, a student must fulfill all high school graduation requirements. In addition, all students must demonstrate the state-determined level of proficiency in English, as well as one or more additional languages. The Seal of Bilingualism recognizes proficiency in all languages, whether they are native languages, heritage languages, languages learned in school or languages learned in other settings. For a list of state approved assessments, see the Guidelines document on the KSDE Seal of Bilingualism website.

Two Levels of Award

Kansas recognizes students at two different levels of proficiency. Students showing proficiency equivalent to ACTFL's Intermediate Mid assessment in both languages will earn a **Silver** Seal of Bilingualism. Students that achieve the equivalent of ACTFL's Advanced Low will earn the **Gold** Seal of Bilingualism. A student's language proficiency must be demonstrated at the designated level or higher for each award. Scores in each skill area cannot be averaged to meet the proficiency requirements.

English Proficiency

In addition to completing all language arts requirements for high school graduation, a student must achieve one of two benchmark scores (for Silver or Gold) on a validated assessment, such as...

- The Kansas English Language Arts Assessment at high school level "career and college ready" (3 or higher).
- Kansas English Language Proficiency Assessment for English Learners "proficient/4" or higher.

- Other assessments identified by the state as appropriate for demonstrating English proficiency at the equivalent of ACTFL's Intermediate Mid or Advanced Low.

Proficiency in a Second World Language

All students must demonstrate proficiency in a second language other than English. Specific assessments have been approved for this purpose by the Advisory Council. For a complete list, see the Seal of Bilingualism Guidelines or contact the Seal of Bilingualism coordinator at KSDE. In cases where valid assessments of specific languages are not available, the Seal of Bilingualism Alternative Assessment Protocol (SoBAAP) can be used to demonstrate proficiency.

Equitable Access

All students means all, regardless of language background or any documented condition that may exclude demonstration of language proficiency in one of the four modes of communication. Accommodations, such as those already in place for state-required assessments of language, should be included for assessments and requirements used to qualify for the Seal of Bilingualism.



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State District Process

School districts are encouraged to adopt and follow the state guidance for honoring graduates. A Guidance document is available on the KSDE website. The Kansas certificate of recognition will be awarded upon high school graduation. Ideally students should be recognized at a special awards ceremony and/or at the graduation ceremony. Regalia in the state's colors and emblem can be purchased through an approved vendor. For more info, see the Seal of Bilingualism website at ksde.org or contact the coordinator of the Seal of Bilingualism at KSDE.

Vision

As the Seal of Bilingualism initiative becomes well-known and standardized across the nation, employers and institutions of higher education will be able to accept the Seal of Bilingualism as a language credential. The standardization of this credential not only benefits employers and educational institutions, it also clarifies learning goals for students in a very practical and motivating way. All students in Kansas should receive information on the Seal of Bilingualism upon entering middle and high school settings so that they are able to organize their Individual Plans of Study (IPS) to meet the proficiency requirements by the time of high school graduation.

For more information, contact:

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