



# Illinois State Board of Education

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**James T. Meeks**  
Chairman

**Tony Smith, Ph.D.**  
State Superintendent of Education

November 13, 2017

Dear Seal of Biliteracy Coordinator:

Students applying for the Illinois State Seal of Biliteracy or Commendation Award must demonstrate proficiency in English and an additional language. The SAT is the state academic assessment for high school. Districts may use results from the ISBE-provided SAT School Day administration or an alternate SAT session to determine whether a student meets the award's English proficiency requirement, which is the English language arts/reading standard set by the state. On October 18, 2017, the Illinois State Board of Education approved a minimum English language arts (ELA) score of 540 to meet standards on the SAT.

In order to ensure that students who were previously identified as meeting the requirements for the Illinois State Seal of Literacy or Commendation Award, the 2017-2018 year will be a transition year. During this year of transition, districts may still use the previously acceptable SAT Evidence-Based Reading and Writing College and Career Ready Benchmark of 480 for purposes of awarding the Seal of Biliteracy and Commendation to 2017-18 graduates. Beginning in school year 2018-19, all applicants who used the SAT to document English proficiency for the Seal or Commendation must achieve a minimum score of 540 on the SAT.

If you have questions or concerns on the matter, please direct them to [biliteracy@isbe.net](mailto:biliteracy@isbe.net).

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jason Helfer".

Jason Helfer, Ph.D.  
Deputy Superintendent for Teaching and Learning