Implementing a Seal of Biliteracy Program for English Learners

Overview/Agenda

• Illinois State Seal of Biliteracy
• Foreign/Native Language Proficiency
  – Assessment & Alternative Evidence Method
• English Language Proficiency
• Commendation toward Biliteracy
• Seal Participation requirements
• Creating pathways for English learners and former English learners

State Seal of Biliteracy

• Section 2-3.159 of the Illinois School Code
• Section 1.442 of the Illinois Administrative Code

http://isbe.net/seal-of-biliteracy/default.htm
What is a Seal of Biliteracy?

• For Illinois public high school graduates who demonstrate a high level of proficiency in four domains in:
  – English, and
  – A language other than English
• Designated on the student’s diploma and transcript

Why a Seal of Biliteracy?

• Encourages the study of other languages
• Benefits to the student
  – Increasing employment and academic opportunities
• Benefits to the global community
  – Communicating with people from other cultures
  – Developing economic opportunities

Biliteracy Awards Available to Students

• Seal of Biliteracy
• Commendation toward Biliteracy
Experience from First Year

- 18 districts participated in 2014-15
- Reported to date (August 2015):
  - 494 students received Seal of Biliteracy
  - 207 received Commendation toward Biliteracy
- Languages
  - Most Spanish
  - Also Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Latin

Language Assessments

Foreign/Native Language Proficiency for Seal of Biliteracy

- Attainment of an ACTFL “intermediate high” composite score or its equivalent on an assessment of all four domains (reading, writing, listening and speaking) in a language other than English identified pursuant to subsection (a)(1).
American Sign Language


Standard Assessment Method

- Student achieves a score equivalent to the ACTFL “intermediate high” on a standardized assessment of the four language domains
Meeting Proficiency Requirements for the Seal of Biliteracy

- Accepted language assessments and the minimum score needed to meet the criteria are posted on ISBE website.
- A district that chooses to use an assessment not on the list to measure foreign language proficiency needs to keep evidence that the assessment meets criteria available to share with ISBE.
  - Standardized assessment available for use on a statewide or national basis and meets generally accepted standards of fairness, validity and reliability as stated in "Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing" (2013), published by the American Educational Research Association.

Examples of Foreign Language Assessments Available in Four Domains

- Advanced Placement (AP) examination
- International Baccalaureate (IB) examination
- ACTFL Assessment of Performance Toward Proficiency in Languages (AAPPL)
- STAMP
- Examinations aligned with the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)

Alternative Evidence Method

- A school district may choose to award the State Seal of Biliteracy through an alternative evidence method when:
  - The standardized assessment for the targeted foreign language does not assess one or more of the four domains of speaking, writing, listening and reading;
  - No standardized assessment exists for the targeted foreign language;
  - A student attains an "intermediate mid" composite score;
  - Evaluating the language proficiency of a student with disabilities for whom the standardized assessment is inappropriate.
Creating a Student Portfolio

• A student portfolio that contains evidence for each component below that demonstrates proficiency equivalent to an “intermediate high” level in the four domains of speaking, writing, listening and reading:
  – Experience in the Targeted Foreign Language
  – Work samples
• Website includes a list of resources, such as assessments for various languages that are available in fewer than the 4 domains.
  – Districts could use these assessments as part of their Alternative Evidence Method in awarding the Seal of Biliteracy

Required Components of Student Portfolio

• Experience in the Targeted Foreign Language
  – Language background
  – Intercultural activities
  – Courses in the language
  – Time spent in countries where language is spoken
• Work Samples in Targeted Foreign Language
  – Compositions, papers, articles written by student
  – Formal presentations
  – Result of other assessments, certificates, diplomas

English Language Proficiency

• Attainment of either a “meets standards” or “exceeds standards” for English language arts on the State assessments administered a the secondary level;
• Attainment of a “proficient” score on the English language proficiency assessment administered at the secondary level; and,
• Attainment of an “intermediate high” composite score on an assessment in English identified pursuant to subsection (a)(1).
Assessments to Measure English Language Proficiency

• ISBE website lists acceptable English language assessments for students who are learning English as a second language.
  
http://isbe.net/seal-of-biliteracy/default.htm

State Commendation toward Biliteracy

• The district may also choose to offer a State Commendation toward Biliteracy to any student who fails to meet the requirements of subsection (a) but attains a score of “intermediate low,” or its equivalent, in the targeted foreign language assessment.

State Commendation Criteria

• English language proficiency
  – “Meets standards” or “exceeds standards” for English language arts in the State assessments administered at the secondary level
  – Attainment of a score established for part-time placement in a transitional bilingual education program on the English language proficiency assessment that is administered at the secondary level
  – Attainment of an “intermediate low” composite score on an assessment in English identified pursuant to subsection (a).

• Foreign language proficiency
  – “intermediate low” is defined in the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines 2012
Designation

- The school district will place a designation of the receipt of the State Seal of Biliteracy/State Commendation toward Biliteracy in the student’s permanent record on the academic transcript and include the designation on the student’s diploma.
- May be awarded and affixed to the diploma and added to the transcript after graduation for students who take language exams during their senior year and do not receive results prior to graduation.

District Notification to ISBE

- A participating school district must notify the State Board of Education of its participation in the Seal of Biliteracy program each year.
- Districts must also:
  - Assign a Seal of Biliteracy coordinator;
  - Meet the appropriate deadlines for notification and reporting to ISBE; and,
  - Provide information to students and parents.

Systems to Support Students in Obtaining the Seal of Biliteracy

- Pathways
  - Important for districts to start building pathways so more students can benefit in the future
  - Across grade levels and districts
  - Involving students, parents and community
- Native/foreign language instruction
  - Dual language programs
  - Transitional bilingual programs
  - Foreign language/World language programs
Promoting Biliteracy for ELs in H.S.

- English
- Home Language
- ESL
- Foreign language classes
- Subject area support
- Dual language subjects
- Extracurricular & Community Experiences
- English Assessment
- Home Language Assessment/Portfolio

Questions for discussion

- How feasible is a Seal of Biliteracy program in your district?
- What languages of biliteracy could your district support?
- What supports exist for students who want to obtain the Seal?
- What additional supports would help more students obtain the Seal?

Next Steps

Go to [Seal of Biliteracy](#) webpage

- Download the application to notify ISBE of the district’s intent to participate
- Review the necessary program requirements
- Identify program structure with appropriate assessment tools
- Submit application to ISBE DELL
Professional Development

• Training for Seal Coordinators is posted at http://www.isbe.net/seal-of-biliteracy/default.htm

• Webinar: Introduction to the Illinois Seal of Biliteracy
  February 18, 2016
  3:30 – 5:00 p.m.
  Register at https://thecntr.org/

Questions

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