



September 17, 2019

Dear County and District Superintendents, Direct-Funded Charter School Administrators, and High School Principals:

Procedures for Awarding the State Seal of Biliteracy, 2019–20

The California State Seal of Biliteracy (SSB) requirements, codified in California *Education Code (EC)* sections 51460–51464 in 2012 and amended in 2017 by Assembly Bill 1142, remain the same for the 2019–20 school year.

The SSB provides recognition to high school students who have demonstrated proficiency in speaking, reading, and writing in one or more languages in addition to English. Each school district, county office of education (COE), or direct-funded charter school that confers the SSB is required to maintain appropriate records to identify students who have met the established criteria for the award and to affix the SSB insignia to the diploma or transcript of each qualifying student.

Per *EC* Section 51461(a), to qualify for the SSB, high school graduates must meet all of the following criteria:

1. Complete all **English language arts requirements** for graduation with an overall **grade point average (GPA) of 2.0 or above** in those classes.
2. Pass the **California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress for English language arts**, at or above the “**standard met**” achievement level.
3. Achieve proficiency in one or more languages in addition to English, demonstrated through **one of the following methods**:
 - (A) Pass a foreign language **Advanced Placement (AP) examination** with a score of **3 or higher** or an **International Baccalaureate (IB) examination** with a score of 4 or higher.
 - (B) Successfully complete a **four-year high school course of study in a world language** with an **overall GPA of 3.0 or above** in that course of study, and **oral proficiency** in the language comparable to that required to pass an AP or IB examination.
 - (C) If no AP examination or off-the-shelf language test exists and the school district can certify to the State Superintendent of Public Instruction that the

test meets the rigor of a four-year high school course of study in that world language, **pass a school district language examination that, at a minimum, assesses speaking, reading, and writing** in a language other than English at the **proficient level or higher**. If a school district offers an examination in a language in which an AP examination or off-the-shelf language test does exist, the school district language examination shall be approved by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction for the purpose of determining proficiency in a language other than English. A pupil who seeks to qualify for the SSB through a language that is not characterized by listening, speaking, or reading, or for which there is no written system, shall **pass an assessment on the modalities that characterize communication in that language** at the proficient level or higher.

(D) Pass the **Scholastic Assessment Test II Foreign Language Examination** with a score of **600 or higher**.

Per *EC* Section 51461(b), **if the primary language of a pupil in any of grades nine through twelve (inclusive) is other than English**, he or she shall do **both of the following** in order to qualify for the SSB:

1. **Attain the level demonstrating English language proficiency on the English Language Proficiency Assessments for California** in transitional kindergarten, kindergarten, or any of the grades one through twelve, inclusive.
2. **Meet all the criteria** listed above in *EC* sections 51461(a)(1)(2) and (3).

All staff involved in collecting data and implementing the SSB in their district should read *EC* sections 51460–51464, which are available on the California Legislative Information web page at <http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes.xhtml>.

Resources to support SSB implementation are available on the California Department of Education (CDE) SSB web page at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/el/er/sealofbilitery.asp> including:

- A **webinar** that provides an overview of the SSB program, the requirements for earning the SSB, and the processes for requesting seals and keeping records.
- An **SSB booklet** in English and Spanish that can be used to promote the SSB with district and school staff, parents, students, and other interested parties. This booklet includes an overview of the SSB program, including its purpose and requirements; statistics; frequently asked questions; a list of resources; and contact information.
- An **informational PowerPoint presentation** in English and Spanish that can be used to inform district and school site staff, parents, students, and other interested parties about the SSB program. This presentation includes an

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overview of the SSB program, including its purpose and requirements; statistics; frequently asked questions; a list of resources; and contact information.

- **Frequently asked questions** that provide responses to common inquiries about the SSB program and procedures.
- **Lists of participating schools and districts** by year.
- An **optional SSB requirements checklist** that can be used internally to track eligible students and ensure they meet the SSB requirements.
- The **online Insignia Request Form** which can be submitted electronically to request insignias for students who meet the eligibility requirements as stated in *EC* Section 51461. All requests for insignias must be submitted using this form as the CDE is no longer accepting paper Insignia Request Forms.

The CDE will process requests for insignias for the 2019–20 school year upon receipt. While there is no deadline for submitting the form, please submit requests at least four weeks before the date of the first graduation ceremony to allow time for the CDE to process the requests and for school staff to affix the insignias to diplomas or transcripts.

Please share this information with designated staff responsible for SSB implementation, such as high school principals, administrators, world language department chairs, and English learner program directors.

If you have questions regarding the SSB, please contact Gina Garcia-Smith, Education Programs Consultant, English Learner Support Division, by phone at 916-319-0265 or by email at SEAL@cde.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

/s/

Veronica Aguila, Ed.D., Director
English Learner Support Division
California Department of Education

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