Seal of Biliteracy Testing for Language Students

Do you speak, read, and write in another language other than English? Would you like for your diploma to formally reflect your language skills for future career opportunities after high school? Are you currently a Briar Woods Senior?

Take the test for the Seal of Biliteracy in your home during the week of December 14, 2020! Email Tammy.Celis@lcps.org **for more information and to register. Registration deadline is Tuesday December 8 by the end of the day. The exam is sponsored by the county, and therefore there is no cost to take it. The following languages are offered:** Arabic, Chinese (Mandarin), English, French, German, Hindi, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, and Thai.

When you email to register, please include the following information:
-Student's full legal name
-Student LCPS ID number
-Which gender student wishes to be addressed by
-What year of language is student currently enrolled in
-If the test going to be taken in a language that is a foreign language or the student's first language

Students will have the ability to test at home with parent/guardian proctoring. PLEASE go to https://www.languagetesting.com/k-12-covid-response to familiarize yourselves with the testing process, the proctoring process, and the exam itself.

Read details below from the Virginia Department of Education below about the **Seal of Biliteracy**:

The Seal of Biliteracy is an award made by a state department of education or local district to recognize a student who has attained proficiency in English and one or more other world languages by high school graduation. The Seal serves to certify attainment of biliteracy for students, employers and institutions of higher education. It is a statement of accomplishment that helps to signal evidence of a student's readiness for career and college, and for engagement as a global citizen.

Frequently Asked Questions

General

- **Who determines if a student is eligible to receive the Seal of Biliteracy?**
  - Local school divisions will be responsible for reviewing evidence submitted by students as proof of proficiency and determining if the student has met the requirements. The requirements for eligibility can be found in the *Guidelines for Issuing a Virginia Seal of Biliteracy*.
- **Can this seal be given in conjunction with another seal?**
  - Yes.The Seal of Biliteracy is awarded independent of the other Seals and as such can be earned alone or in any combination with other Seals.
- **Does the Seal of Biliteracy come with any high school credits?**
  - No. The Seal of Biliteracy is a recognition of a minimum proficiency level attained by a student in at least one language in addition to English. The Seal of Biliteracy is not awarded based on seat time or course completion requirements and it is not tied to credits. Attainment of the Seal does not by itself provide credits towards graduation. See the *Standards of Accreditation* section 8 VAC 20-131-110 for more on the awarding of credits.
- **What kind of insignia will be provided to students who earn the Seal?**
  - One gold, embossed, self-adhesive seal will be provided for each qualifying graduate. It is a state-wide seal that has been specially designed for the Seal of Biliteracy designation.
- **The original legislation mentions grade point average. Can a student's GPA be used to award the Seal of Biliteracy?**
  - No. The original legislation did direct the Board of Education to consider GPA as one of a number of possible criteria, however; this option was not included in the final approved criteria as our current grading systems are not proficiency-based.

Demonstrating Proficiency in English

- **The guidelines state under criteria: "pass all required End-of-course Assessments in English reading and writing at the proficient or higher level." What would constitute proficient?**

    - Scores of 400 or higher are considered proficient for these SOL assessments.
- **Can the End-of-Course Writing requirement be fulfilled by passing a substitute test that is permitted by VDOE such as Work Keys Business Writing?**
    - The student must demonstrate proficiency in English by whatever assessments are currently in place as graduation requirements, which at this time is the end-of-course English Reading and Writing SOL tests given in high school; or any state approved substitute assessment given in place of the English SOL tests. Scores of 400 or higher are considered proficient for these SOL assessments.
- **For the Seal, Intermediate-mid proficiency is the requirement. Would ESL students need to meet a 5.0 overall and 5.0 literacy for the English biliteracy element to be considered for the Seal?**
    - All candidates for the Seal of Biliteracy including English Language Learners (ELL) will demonstrate proficiency in English by whatever assessments are currently in place as graduation requirements, which at this time are the end-of-course English Reading and Writing SOL tests given in high school. Scores of 400 or higher are considered proficient for these SOL assessments. If the ELL is demonstrating proficiency in English through an approved alternative assessment, then they must achieve the score needed in that assessment to satisfy graduation requirements for English.

Demonstrating Proficiency in Languages Other Than English

- **When should/must the foreign language proficiency be demonstrated? I know that we have the 11th grade English SOL but if a student, for example, reaches Intermediate-Mid on the STAMP in 8th grade, is this acceptable to earn the Seal? Is there an expiration date for Foreign Language tests?**
    - At this time, the criteria do not stipulate a time-frame for demonstrating proficiency in languages other than English. The local school division will determine the process for submitting and evaluating evidence of proficiency for their students. Best practice in this area would be to assess as close in time as possible to the date of graduation to ensure that language proficiency is accurately portrayed.

- **When an assessment has more than one part, which part or parts does a student have to take to be eligible for the Seal? If they pass just one part of the assessment at the intermediate-mid level, does that count?**
    - The required minimum elements for each assessment are listed on the Acceptable Evidence of Proficiency(Word). If a test has no composite score, use the lowest score on the test that involves literacy and/ or communication with others for the proficiency rating.
- **The SAT II only seems available for Latin. Can the SAT II (with listening) be used for modern languages?**
    - No. The SAT II is not accepted as evidence of proficiency at this time for any language other than Latin.
- **Students who are seeking to use the results from an AP or IB exam taken during their senior year to qualify for the Seal of Biliteracy will receive the results two to three months after graduation. Will these students be eligible to receive a seal after graduation? How can these students be recognized at their graduation ceremony?**
    - Yes, the seal may be awarded after graduation. Divisions may choose to recognize these students as "candidates for the Virginia Seal of Biliteracy" during graduation ceremonies.