



The Missouri Seal of Biliteracy

Implementation Guide

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Missouri Seal of Biliteracy: Implementation Guide

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2018-19 Updates

As the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) continually pursues effective strategies and resources that guarantee the superior preparation and performance of every child and in life, I am encouraged by the success of Missouri Seal of Biliteracy (Missouri Seal) in its pilot year and the potential for the program moving forward. As we embark on the second year, we have taken the time to listen and learn from Missouri school districts in order to improve the finer details of the program.

I would like to first establish that Missouri's policy meets the minimum criteria collaboratively developed by the American Council for the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL), the Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) International Association, the National Association of Bilingual Education (NABE) and the National Council of State Supervisors for Language (NCSSFL). Additionally, work on this document was positively influenced by the guidance provided by the staff at <http://sealofbiliteracy.org>.

For the 2018-19 school year and beyond, Missouri has amended or updated the following to clarify and improve the state policy:

- To be more consistent with university expectations, the AAPPL score for the standard Seal will increase from an Intermediate-2 (I2) to an Intermediate-3 (I3).
- Due to inconsistent grading policies and philosophies, the grade point average (GPA) criterion will no longer be required.
- This document will also:
 - Clarify portfolio requirements for languages for which there is no standardized assessment.
 - Provide a series of frequently asked questions.
 - Clarify expectations for students with disabilities

Thank you for your interest and work in making the Missouri Seal a reality.

Kind Regards,

Ryan Rumpf
Director of ELD and World Languages



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The process to make the Seal of Biliteracy available to Missouri students was years in the making. We would like to acknowledge the savvy, persistent and passionate educators who spent much of their own time working to make this happen.

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Policy

The Missouri Seal of Biliteracy Purpose Statement

The Missouri Seal of Biliteracy (Missouri Seal) promotes active participation in a global society and economy by incentivizing, recognizing and celebrating the acquisition of biliteracy skills and sociocultural awareness. The Missouri Seal is a policy-level commitment to develop proficiency in two or more languages by high school graduation that aligns with the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) goal of preparing Missouri students for a lifetime of success.

The Missouri Seal of Biliteracy will require

- districts to formally notify DESE of their intent to award graduating students one of two Missouri Seals of Biliteracy and the adherence to the minimum criteria set by DESE.
- students to satisfy criteria for biliteracy attainment using internationally or nationally recognized language assessments, or in the cases of rare or unique languages, a comprehensive portfolio evaluated by a professional proficient in that language.

Rationale

The Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education is dedicated to supporting Missouri schools in providing an education that fully prepares students for life in a global society and economy. These skills include the ability to communicate with clients, colleagues and associates who speak a language other than English as well as understand the sociocultural intricacies that can further enhance the relationship.

The Missouri Seal is intended to clarify, validate and revitalize the public perceptions associated with acquiring languages, raise awareness of the need and benefits of acquiring a second language and promote cultural understanding.

Definition

The Missouri Seal is recognition awarded by a local school district to recognize students who have attained proficiency in English and at least one other language before high school graduation. In order for a district to award the Missouri Seal of Biliteracy, districts must follow the policies and procedures established by DESE.

Missouri Seal of Biliteracy

Introduction

The Missouri Seal of Biliteracy is an award granted by a local district to recognize a student who has attained proficiency in English and one or more other world language(s) before high school graduation. The recognition of attaining biliteracy becomes a part of the high school transcript for these students and serves to certify attainment of biliteracy for the community, employers and universities. The Missouri Seal is meant to

- encourage the study of a second language;
- recognize, promote, and praise students for their accomplishment;
- value diversity;
- provide employers with a means of identifying bilingual employees;
- provide universities with a method to recognize and give credit to applicants;
- prepare students with 21st century skills that will benefit them in a global economy and society; and
- strengthen relationships and honor the cultures and languages in a community.

Eligibility

The Missouri Seal is intended to be earned by graduating high school students as well as awarded and celebrated at the culmination of the students' senior year. Native English-speaking students may acquire the second language through traditional world language classrooms, community-based programs, at home, worldly experiences or any other method attempted by the student. English learners (ELs) and other heritage language learners are also eligible. It is important to emphasize that ALL students acquiring any language in addition to English is a potential awardee. As the Missouri Seal is intended to promote not only the acquisition of a second language but also the participation in a global society and economy, a measure of sociocultural competency is required of all students earning the Missouri Seal.

Missouri Seal Award Options

Districts may choose to offer a pair of awards to 12th grade students to recognize their accomplishments in acquiring a second language. The chart below lists the awards and a brief summary of the criteria. The minimum criteria for each award type are detailed later in this manual.

Award	Description
Distinguished Missouri Seal of Biliteracy	The Distinguished Missouri Seal is for students who show an advanced level of proficiency in at least two languages.
Missouri Seal of Biliteracy	The standard Missouri Seal is awarded to students who show a high level of achievement in English and an intermediate level of proficiency in another language.

It is important for districts to formally recognize students earning the Missouri Seal by noting the achievement on the high school transcript. The district must include a statement noting the achievement on the transcript so colleges, universities and employers can identify students with biliteracy skills. Please note that many university policies require specific scores from the LOTE assessment. If this information is not on the transcript, the student must also submit score reports to the university to determine the number of credits (s)he will receive.

Transcript Wording

Although districts can word the statement as they please, DESE suggests the following:

“(Student name) has earned the Seal of Biliteracy in English and German based on a score of 3 on the German Advanced Placement Language and Culture Assessment.”

“(Student name) has earned the Distinguished Seal of Biliteracy in English and Spanish based on AAPPL scores of: Interpersonal Listening & Speaking-A, Interpretive Reading-A, Interpretive Listening-A, Presentational Writing-A.

Additionally, districts are encouraged to recognize the achievement as a way to not only acknowledge the accomplishment, but also attract the interest of other students who may be motivated to earn the award. This could include

- recognition ceremonies (in addition to the graduation ceremony);
- publicizing the students in a district newsletter or local newspaper; or
- small trophies, certificates or medals.

Districts may also wish to include Pathway Awards as part of a comprehensive language development program (see Appendix B).

State-Wide Procedures

Many states, including Missouri, have worked closely with a variety of organizations to design the policies and procedures for earning the Seal of Biliteracy. In order for a district to award the

Missouri Seal of Biliteracy, the district must submit the Initial Missouri Seal of Biliteracy form along with verification of local school board recognition and any other accompanying documents to be approved by the Director of ELD and World Languages. This important procedure ensures consistency across the state as well as local approval by the governing body.

The Initial Missouri Seal of Biliteracy is a simple, yet detailed form and will include three different sections: General Information, District Criteria, and Certification. Certification of this document can be made by the superintendent or an authorized representative such as the district-level Seal of Biliteracy Coordinator. It is important to attach any accompanying documents, such as a board resolution, rubrics or forms.

Criteria for Languages Other Than English

All students must demonstrate proficiency in both English and a language other than English (LOTE). Districts choose the instrument(s) used and determine how to best fund the assessment. The district must show alignment with language proficiency levels used by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL), which are briefly described in Appendix A. A minimum achievement of Intermediate Mid, according to ACTFL, or the equivalent on another measure of proficiency, by the end of 12th grade is required to earn a Missouri Seal of Biliteracy. Students achieving a minimum of Advanced Low according to ACTFL are eligible for the prestigious Distinguished Missouri Seal of Biliteracy. The following chart shows the minimum scores from common language assessments for each award level.

Assessment	Missouri Seal	Distinguished Missouri Seal
Advanced Placement Language and Culture or Literature and Culture	3 or higher	5
International Baccalaureate Language B Standard Level (SL)	4 or higher	6 or higher
International Baccalaureate Language B Higher Level (HL)	4 or higher	5 or higher
International Baccalaureate Language A Literature or Language and Literature Standard Level or Higher Level (SL or HL)	3 or higher	4 or higher
Standards-Based Measurement of Proficiency (STAMP4S)	Intermediate Mid each domain	Advanced Low each domain
ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview, Reading Proficiency Test, Writing Proficiency Test	Intermediate Mid	Advanced Low
ACTFL Assessment of Performance toward Proficiency in Languages (AAPPL)	Intermediate 3 (I-3) in each domain	Advanced (A) in each domain
Signed Language Proficiency Interview (SLPI) for American Sign Language	Intermediate Plus	Advanced
DELE, DELF, Goethe Institute, Common European Framework	B1	B2

The assessment results must come from the student’s junior or senior year in order to satisfy specific university requirements necessary to award credit for prior learning.

As mentioned previously, all students from any language background have the opportunity to earn the Missouri Seal of Biliteracy. The following chart shows the minimum criteria for the student portfolios. Some languages may have an assessment in only two domains, such as speaking or writing. In these cases, the portfolio only needs to include the unassessed domains.

Type of Seal	Portfolio Items
Seal of Biliteracy	<p><u>Listening:</u> Written summary (100-150 words) from an authentic audio or video that is at least one minute in length. Source must be included.</p> <p><u>Speaking:</u> Recorded presentation on any <u>academic</u> topic of interest (2-4 minutes).</p> <p><u>Interpersonal Communication:</u> Recorded interview (1-3 minutes) of a conversation with a native speaker (ie. Family Members) – Topic: What are your future goals and how can bilingualism be a benefit.</p> <p><u>Reading/Writing:</u> Written summary (150-200 words) of a current event taken from an authentic, written news article from the home country.</p>
Distinguished Seal of Biliteracy	<p><u>Listening:</u> Written summary (200-250 words) from an authentic audio or video that is at least one minute in length. Source must be included.</p> <p><u>Speaking:</u> Recorded presentation on any <u>academic</u> topic of interest (5-7 minutes).</p> <p><u>Interpersonal Communication:</u> Recorded interview (3-5 minutes) of a conversation with a native speaker (ie. Family Members) – Topic: What are your future goals and how can bilingualism be a benefit.</p> <p><u>Reading/Writing:</u> Written summary (250-300 words) of a current event taken from an authentic, written news article from the home country including the author’s opinion and justification.</p>

Districts are responsible for finding a competent assessor for the portfolios. If the district has exhausted all options in finding an appropriate community member to assess the portfolio, please contact the Director of ELD and World Languages at DESE for assistance.

Criteria for Language Proficiency in English

Native English speakers and former English learners, upon entry to high school and including monitored students, must earn a minimum score of Proficient on the English II End-of-Course (EOC) assessment. If the student did not earn a satisfactory score on the English II EOC, an ACT

ELA score of 18 may be used for the Missouri Seal and an ACT ELA score of 21 may be used for the Distinguished Seal. Students entering high school designated as an English learner may substitute a minimum score of 4.0 on the ACCESS for ELs 2.0 assessment. To earn the Distinguished Seal, ELs must earn an overall 4.7 on the ACCESS. **Students only need one standardized measure of English proficiency.**

Sociocultural Competence

Students must demonstrate high levels of sociocultural competence as it relates to English and the LOTE. Decisions on selected measures lie solely with the district and must include measures for demonstrating positive attitudes toward bilingualism and using both languages in a culturally appropriate way. Districts should develop rubrics to use in the assessment of sociocultural competency and articulate minimum criteria for achievement in this area. Some activities that demonstrate sociocultural competency include, but are not limited to

- translation assisting community organization;
- completion of community service project using both languages;
- active participation in multicultural community events; or
- essay explaining how proficiency in both languages will help the community.

Students with Disabilities

If a student has specific accommodations written into their individualized education plan (IEP) or 504 plan that is applicable to either the English or LOTE assessment, those may certainly be used.

Frequently Asked Questions

Can a student take an assessment more than once?

Yes. The student needs to earn the minimum criteria. It doesn't matter how many times the student takes the assessment.

Do students have to take a minimum number of foreign language courses?

No. In order for most students to earn the Missouri Seal, they will need extensive exposure to the target language. The standard 4-year program will not guarantee a student will earn the award and districts are encouraged to improve and expand access to language instruction. However, there is no minimum number of classes taken. This is primarily due to the fact that only a few select foreign language courses are offered in Missouri school districts while the Seal is available to any student proficient in any of the world's languages.

Are students selected by school district personnel?

No. All students who meet the criteria are awarded the Missouri Seal. Districts cannot choose which student(s) are given the award.

How are the LOTE assessments funded?

The assessments are funded locally. In all cases during the pilot year, the cost of the assessment is passed on to parents. There is a reasonable justification for doing this: successful students can earn significant incentives at a growing number of Missouri universities and businesses.

How does the district obtain stamps, stickers, medals, ribbons, etc.?

DESE does not provide these items. Districts are encouraged to contract with a local printing company if it wishes to purchase them.

How will the district receive the certificate to give to students?

The Seal of Biliteracy Coordinator should have received a sample certificate when the application was approved. You are welcome to request the certificate again or make a district-specific certificate.

Who is responsible for a school district being allowed to award the Seal?

The Missouri Seal is awarded by local school districts. As such, local school districts are responsible for completing the steps outlined in this guidebook in order to award the Missouri Seal.

Appendix A – Proficiency Guidelines

(Adapted from 2012 ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines)

Intermediate Mid

Speaking – Speakers at the Intermediate Mid sublevel are able to successfully handle a variety of uncomplicated communicative tasks in straightforward social situations. Conversation is generally limited to those predictable and concrete exchanges necessary for survival in the target culture. These include personal information related to self, family, home, daily activities, interests and personal preferences, as well as physical and social needs, such as food, shopping, travel, and lodging. Intermediate Mid speakers are able to express personal meaning by creating with the language, in part by combining and recombining known elements and conversational input to produce responses typically consisting of sentences and strings of sentences. Their speech may contain pauses, reformulations, and self-corrections as they search for adequate vocabulary and appropriate language forms to express themselves. In spite of the limitations in their vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar and syntax, Intermediate Mid speakers are generally understood by sympathetic interlocutors accustomed to dealing with non-natives.

Listening – At the Intermediate Mid sublevel, listeners are able to understand simple, sentence-length speech, one utterance at a time, in a variety of basic personal and social contexts. Comprehension is most often accurate with highly familiar and predictable topics although a few misunderstandings may occur. Intermediate Mid listeners may get some meaning from oral texts typically understood by Advanced-level listeners.

Reading – At the Intermediate Mid sublevel, readers are able to understand short, non-complex texts that convey basic information and deal with basic personal and social topics to which the reader brings personal interest or knowledge, although some misunderstandings may occur. Readers at this level may get some meaning from short connected texts featuring description and narration, dealing with familiar topics.

Writing - Writers at the Intermediate Mid sublevel are able to meet a number of practical writing needs. They can write short, simple communications, compositions, and requests for information in loosely connected texts about personal preferences, daily routines, common events, and other personal topics. Their writing is framed in present time but may contain references to other time frames. The writing style closely resembles oral discourse. Writers at the Intermediate Mid sublevel show evidence of control of basic sentence structure and verb forms. This writing is best defined as a collection of discrete sentences and/or questions loosely strung together. There is little evidence of deliberate organization. Intermediate Mid writers can be understood readily by natives used to the writing of non-natives. When Intermediate Mid writers attempt Advanced-level writing tasks, the quality and/or quantity of their writing declines and the message may be unclear.

Advanced Low

Speaking – Speakers at the Advanced Low sublevel are able to handle a variety of communicative tasks. They are able to participate in most informal and some formal conversations on topics related to school, home, and leisure activities. They can also speak about some topics related to employment, current events, and matters of public and community interest. Advanced Low speech is typically marked by a certain grammatical roughness (e.g., inconsistent control of verb endings), but the overall performance of the Advanced-level tasks is sustained, albeit minimally. The vocabulary of Advanced Low speakers often lacks specificity. Nevertheless, Advanced Low speakers are able to use communicative strategies such as rephrasing and circumlocution.

Listening – At the Advanced Low sublevel, listeners are able to understand short conventional narrative and descriptive texts with a clear underlying structure though their comprehension may be uneven. The listener understands the main facts and some supporting details. Comprehension may often derive primarily from situational and subject-matter knowledge.

Reading – At the Advanced Low sublevel, readers are able to understand conventional narrative and descriptive texts with a clear underlying structure though their comprehension may be uneven. These texts predominantly contain high-frequency vocabulary and structures. Readers understand the main ideas and some supporting details. Comprehension may often derive primarily from situational and subject-matter knowledge. Readers at this level will be challenged to comprehend more complex texts.

Writing - Writers at the Advanced Low sublevel are able to meet basic work and/or academic writing needs. They demonstrate the ability to narrate and describe in major time frames with some control of aspect. They are able to compose simple summaries on familiar topics. Advanced Low writers are able to combine and link sentences into texts of paragraph length and structure. Their writing, while adequate to satisfy the criteria of the Advanced level, may not be substantive. Writers at the Advanced Low sublevel demonstrate the ability to incorporate a limited number of cohesive devices, and may resort to some redundancy and awkward repetition. They rely on patterns of oral discourse and the writing style of their first language. These writers demonstrate minimal control of common structures and vocabulary associated with the Advanced level. Their writing is understood by natives not accustomed to the writing of non-natives, although some additional effort may be required in the reading of the text. When attempting to perform functions at the Superior level, their writing will deteriorate significantly.

Appendix B – Pathway Awards

Pathway awards acknowledge any student who meets district-level language benchmarks at designated times during their preK-12 education. Districts that offer dual language programs or world language classes at the elementary and middle school levels are encouraged to set benchmarks for students and recognize student achievements. Districts that do not offer world language classes in the lower grades are still encouraged to recognize students who have sought out second language acquisition opportunities in their communities.

Districts that support English learners will find these awards as excellent strategies to recognize English learners for their achievements. Additionally, English learners at the elementary level are prone to what is referred to as subtractive bilingualism. In other words, students lose proficiency in their first language and experience many academic and social challenges leading to long-term ELs and in many cases high school dropouts. Pathway Awards are a positive step districts can take to resolve these issues.

When designing Pathway Awards, districts should consider what program models are available and if opportunities exist to add or improve language education at all levels. The following is a list of possible Pathway Award opportunities:

- End of Preschool – For parents who wish to enroll their children in a dual language program.
- End of 3rd grade – This is when many English learners are exited from the ELD/dual language program.
- Reclassification – Recognizing students for meeting the ELD reclassification criteria at any grade.
- End of middle school – To encourage students to continue their pursuit of the Missouri Seal and possibly enter into a more advanced foreign language course.

As with the Missouri Seal, districts are encouraged to celebrate these achievements during a ceremony and through a district-level or community publication.

Appendix C – 2018-19 Memorandum



Office of College and Career Readiness

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July 1, 2018

Re: Revisions to the Missouri Seal of Biliteracy Policy (July 2018)

The AAPPL score for the standard Seal will be adjusted to reflect expectations of Missouri universities recognizing the Seal. Students taking the AAPPL must earn a score of Intermediate 3 (I3) in each domain to qualify for the standard Seal.

The Grade Point Average requirement will no longer be a criterion. Due to inconsistent grading policies and philosophies, the GPA cannot be considered a standardized measure and will no longer be necessary. Districts may opt to continue using the GPA as a local criterion.

Students seeking the Seal in a language for which there is no available assessment will need to compile a portfolio containing evidence of academic language use and comprehension in all applicable language domains: speaking, listening, reading and writing. The district must assess the portfolio using a rubric correlating with ACTFL Intermediate-Mid descriptors for the standard Seal and the ACTFL Advanced-Low descriptors for the Distinguished Seal. If the district needs assistance locating a native speaker of the language to assess the portfolio, please contact me directly.

Finally, after a successful pilot year, it has been determined that a yearly renewal application is not necessary. I would like to share my appreciation for the voluntary data submission excluding personal identifiable information by participating districts during the 2017-18 school year.

Kind Regards,

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