

The Wisconsin Seal of Biliteracy

Purpose Statement

The Wisconsin Seal of Biliteracy promotes excellence for all by building upon the rich cultural and linguistic assets of Wisconsin's students. The Wisconsin Seal will communicate a policy-level commitment to develop strong proficiency in two or more languages in an ever-shifting global landscape so that every student has the opportunity to graduate prepared and equipped with the cultural and linguistic capacity to participate effectively in a multilingual and global 21st century society.

The Seal will require:

- Criteria for advanced biliteracy attainment using a data-based, nationally recognized assessment framework¹ valued by employers, communities, and institutions of higher education.
- Criteria for demonstration of sociocultural competency to address the needs of local and global communities.

Background and Rationale

Our communities and our 21st century global economy demand the expertise of socioculturally competent individuals who are also fully bilingual and bicultural. As such, multilingualism at high levels ought to be nurtured within Wisconsin's students.

The Wisconsin Seal of Biliteracy seeks to develop, maintain, and revitalize the attitudes and dispositions regarding high levels of bilingualism and biliteracy; raise awareness of the benefits of biliteracy and biculturalism; and elevate the status of languages other than English.

With the establishment of a Wisconsin Seal of Biliteracy, the state publicly demonstrates that it values high levels of bilingualism and biculturalism in its communities and workforce.

Work on the Wisconsin Seal of Biliteracy was inspired by the California Seal of Biliteracy developed by *Californians Together* and is a response to requests made by Wisconsin school districts wanting to recognize the linguistic achievements and sociocultural competencies of their multilingual and emergent bilingual students.

Definition of Seal of Biliteracy

A seal of biliteracy is an award given by a school or district in recognition of students who have attained proficiency in English and one or more partner languages and have demonstrated high levels of sociocultural competency by high school graduation.

¹ Note: For less commonly spoken languages for which there is no nationally recognized measure, districts will be able to submit an alternate method of measuring proficiency in the partner language.

Which students will be eligible for a Wisconsin Seal of Biliteracy?

The Wisconsin Seal is intended to be earned by students who have learned English and one or more languages. Students may learn language in a variety of ways, for example, through school-based programming, community-based programming, their families, or other experiences, to be eligible for a Seal. Students eligible for a Seal will also demonstrate high levels of sociocultural competency.

Districts are encouraged to consider pathways that meet or exceed the benchmarks outlined in the chart below.

Grade Levels	Pathway for Participation <i>Participation in developing a positive disposition towards bilingualism².</i>	Pathway for Achievement <i>Achievement in developing a positive disposition and grade appropriate skills related to bilingualism.</i>
Pre-Kindergarten	Pathway for Participation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● programming that values bilingualism ● home language oral and literacy development 	Pathway for Achievement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● N/A
Elementary	Pathway for Participation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● developing a partner language ● use of English and a partner language ● positive attitude toward bilingualism 	Pathway for Achievement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● demonstration of all of the participation criteria ● increasing proficiency in English and a partner language
Middle School	Pathway for Participation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● growth in a partner language ● use of English and a partner language ● positive attitude toward bilingualism 	Pathway for Achievement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● demonstration of all of the participation criteria ● growth in English and a partner language ● growth in the 5Cs* of world language learning ● demonstration of active use of two languages ● positive attitude toward bilingualism
By the End of Grade 12	Pathway for Participation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● participation in one or more language classes ● growth in the 5Cs* of world language learning ● use and application of English and a partner language ● positive attitude toward bilingualism 	Seal of Biliteracy Achievement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● proficiency in English and a partner language ● competency in the 5Cs* of world language learning ● active use and application of English and a partner language in socioculturally competent ways ● positive disposition toward lifelong bilingualism and biliteracy

*Note: The 5Cs of world language learning, as defined by [the World Readiness Standards for Learning Languages](#), are: communication; cultures; connections; comparisons; and, communities.

² Bilingualism implies the development of biliteracy and biculturalism.