

Michigan Seal of Biliteracy



Celebrating Michigan's Cultural and Linguistic Capital

Updated September 2019

Acknowledgements

The Michigan Department of Education would like to thank and acknowledge individuals who assisted in the initial collaborative development of this policy at the MDE.

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Document Updates

August 2019

Criteria for Granting the Seal was updated to remove the portfolio and replace it with the MDE Alternative Process for Assessment for Languages without an Approved Commercial Assessment. For languages where a commercial assessment is available, the commercial assessment must be used unless the administration fee exceeds \$200. Assessments that assess only expressive domains (speaking and writing), must be supplemented with the MDE Alternative Process for Assessment. Additionally, a section was added to clarify ways of working with languages that use less than four language domains/skills.

Alternative Method of Assessment was updated to include the newly created MDE Alternative Process for Assessment for languages without an approved commercial assessment.

INTRODUCTION

The Michigan Seal of Biliteracy is an award presented to students who have demonstrated proficiency in English and at least one other world language by high school graduation. Our Michigan schools and learning institutions promote world languages, English language development, and heritage language maintenance.

As other states have recognized, the language skills of students who complete extended sequences of world language study as well as those whose native language is other than English, increase their marketability in the workplace and are a valuable economic resource to the state. More than 95% of the world's consumers and 80% of the world's purchasing power are outside the United States. Currently, 1.2 million Michigan jobs are tied to international trade (Business Roundtable, 2015). It is imperative for students to develop language proficiency in English and other languages so that our state remains competitive in the global marketplace. In addition to career advantages, students who learn more than one language gain numerous cognitive benefits, including improvements in executive functioning, working memory, attention span, flexibility, and creative thinking (Bialystok, 2007).

Additionally, the Seal of Biliteracy recognizes the rich cultural and linguistic diversity that exists in our state. Michigan is home to residents who come from a variety of cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Our Great Lakes State's history proudly includes a vast number of Native American cultures and immigrants from all over the world. Our state is home to many ethnic communities dedicated to maintaining their cultural identities and celebrating their contributions. We are host to many newcomers who contribute to our society in many ways.

Alignment to Top 10 in 10

Michigan is one of 36 states and Washington D.C, that awards a state Seal of Biliteracy (As of September 1, 2019). In Michigan's journey to becoming a top ten performing state in ten years, awarding the Seal of Biliteracy aligns to the goals and strategies of this endeavor (see Appendix A).

This policy has been developed with each of the seven goals in mind. In the next section, the goals have been referenced to demonstrate the alignment of the Michigan Seal of Biliteracy with the state's charge to become a top ten state in 10 years.

PURPOSE AND RATIONALE

Value of Learning and Maintaining World Languages and Cultures

Developing language proficiency and cultural competence strengthens intergroup relationships, affirms the value of diversity, and honors the multiple cultures and languages of a community. Michigan's adoption of a Seal of Biliteracy sets a standard and expectation for our students who clearly value learning world languages as well as maintaining native and heritage languages and cultures in our schools, homes, and communities.

The numerous cognitive and social benefits for students learning more than one language are well documented and include improvements in executive functioning, working

memory, attention span, flexibility, creative thinking, greater intercultural awareness, and open-mindedness (Davin & Heineke, 2017).

Aligns with Top 10 in 10 Goals and Strategies

Goal 1: 1.3(b); Goal 5: 5.1(g); Goal 7: 7.4(b)

Michigan's Global Competitiveness

Globalization is a relatively new term although the concept is thousands of years in the making (Stone, 2005). According to Stone, in today's society "the pace of the exchange of ideas, peoples, and goods is greatly increased; modern technology makes the communication of ideas almost instantaneous; and there are few places on the globe to which the average person cannot travel with 24 hours." Despite modern technologies, having the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately continues to be paramount.

Customers in 207 countries buy Michigan-made goods and services, and foreign-owned companies employ over 200,000 workers in Michigan (Business Roundtable, 2015).

Although English is widely used in international trade, the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately with colleagues and trade partners who speak other languages is crucial for Michigan's competitiveness and economic growth. The Michigan Seal of Biliteracy fully aligns with the goal of global competitiveness.

Aligns with Top 10 in 10 Goal and Strategies

Goal 1: 1.8; Goal 2: 2.3, 2.4, 2.6; Goal 4: 4.5; Goal 6: 6.4, 6.6

Articulation Between PreK-12 and Higher Education

College-readiness refers not only to successful completion of coursework, but also to the recognition and acceptance of skills and knowledge gained beyond the classroom. The Michigan Seal of Biliteracy honors language proficiency regardless of where or how it is acquired.

The Michigan Seal of Biliteracy establishes criteria to inform and facilitate placement decisions in language courses at postsecondary institutions. In addition, the Michigan Seal of Biliteracy has the potential to play the same role as the granting of credit for dual enrollment, Advanced Placement, and International Baccalaureate courses.

Aligns with Top 10 in 10 Goals and Strategies

Goal 1: 1.3(a),(b), 1.4, 1.6(a),(b),(c), 1.8, 1.9; Goal 2: 2.1(a), 2.1(b), 2.1(c), 2.2, 2.2(a), 2.3, 2.4, 2.4(a),(b), 2.6, 2.6(a), 2.7(c), 2.8, 2.8(a),(b); Goal 3: 3.2(a), 3.3, 3.3(a),(b),(c); Goal 4: 4.2, 4.2(a), 4.5, 4.7, 4.7(a); Goal 5: 5.1(a-g), 5.2(a); Goal 6: 6.1, 6.4, 6.6, 6.6(a); Goal 7: 7.1, 7.1(a-d), 7.3 (a-e), 7.4(b),(c)

Career Readiness

In a recent survey of U.S. employers, 66% reported valuing foreign language skills in the hiring process, and 41% reported giving preference to multilingual job candidates (Damari et al., 2017). In Michigan, international trade-related jobs grew 17% from 2004 to 2014 while total employment declined 1% (Business Roundtable, 2015). There is also a growing need for bilingual employees across a wide range of occupations, regardless of educational requirements or salary (New American Economy, 2017). The Michigan Seal of Biliteracy serves as an endorsement to employers that a high school graduate enters the workforce with highly desirable skills in more than one language.

Aligns with Top 10 in 10 Goals and Strategies

Goal 1: 1.3(a), 1.6, 1.8, 1.9; Goal 2: 2.1(a),(b), 2.2, 2.3, 2.4(a),(b), 2.6(a); Goal 4: 4.2(a), 4.7(a); Goal 5: 5.1(a),(f),(g); Goal 6: 6.1, 6.4; and Goal 7: 7.3(a)

PATHWAYS TO BILITERACY

Points of Entry

Bilingual or multilingual students are an asset to the nation and their ability to use multiple languages is a skill that should be encouraged and recognized. The unique language abilities and cultural competencies of these students enhance the quality of our workforce as a society, providing a contribution to commerce and enrichment of the job market.

Throughout a child’s educational journey, there are multiple opportunities to pursue dual or multiple language proficiency. The Seal is not designed to dictate a specific course of study or point of entry, but rather to honor diverse pathways to achieve biliteracy, promote active engagement in pursuing it, and ultimately recognize that achievement. The following provides a brief description of various pathways to biliteracy.

Academic Coursework

The most familiar method of learning a world language or acquiring English as an additional language is through PreK-12 academic coursework. Bilingual and immersion programs, Advanced Placement courses, International Baccalaureate language and literature courses, dual enrollment in community college/university courses, traditional world language classes, study abroad and exchange programs, and academic coursework through homeschooling are all viable means for attaining proficiency in a world language.

Heritage and Home Language Acquisition

Many students in the United States are raised in a bilingual or multilingual environment and/or in homes in which a language other than English is spoken. Known as heritage language speakers, these students acquire language through the experience of interacting with family members, friends, and neighbors. Heritage language speakers possess skills necessary for our national security and prosperity. These students are an essential component of our multilingual or multicultural society.

Heritage Language Maintenance

Deliberate efforts to maintain the heritage or native language are prevalent within many culturally and linguistically diverse families and communities.

Encouragement to participate in activities where the heritage language is used such as multimedia, community organizations, ethnic or cultural marketplaces can be very beneficial to society. Recognizing the value of maintaining the heritage language sustains important direct cultural ties to students’ respective families and communities. These efforts to preserve the heritage language must be in place as students become more immersed in English as the dominant language.

Summary

The Michigan Seal of Biliteracy provides multiple pathways for students to achieve the Seal

by honoring, encouraging, and recognizing that students may already have achieved high levels of proficiency in English and one or more languages and may earn the Seal of Biliteracy through a demonstration of proficiency. The efforts to maintain languages and to enhance the skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing will enable students to achieve the necessary proficiency to obtain the Michigan Seal of Biliteracy in support of future educational and career opportunities.

CRITERIA FOR GRANTING THE SEAL OF BILITERACY

Determining Eligibility

The Michigan Seal of Biliteracy has been designed to be awarded to high school graduates or the equivalent. The Seal may be awarded to any student receiving a high school diploma, a high school certificate of completion or a high school equivalency certificate who meets the requirements stated below for English and a Language Other than English.

Approved Assessments for Demonstrating Proficiency

Demonstrating Proficiency in English: All recipients of the Seal must meet all Michigan Merit Curriculum requirements and local requirements for graduation.

Demonstrating Proficiency in a Language Other than English: Acceptable assessments used to provide evidence of world language proficiency in any language must meet the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) criteria of Intermediate High or equivalent.

Commercial Assessments that Assess Only Expressive Domains (e.g. World Speak)

Some commercial assessments assess the expressive domains (speaking and writing) of language but do not assess the receptive domains (reading and listening). If these assessments are used, supplement with an appropriate approved commercial assessment or use the Alternative Process for Assessment to determine the level of proficiency for the unassessed domains.

The current list of approved assessments can be found at:

https://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/MSOB_Assessment_Resources_for_Posting_627184_7.pdf

Foreign Transcripts and Other Formal Documentation

Students transferring from other countries may demonstrate proficiency by providing transcripts from a school in a foreign country showing at least one year of instruction in a language other than English in Grade 6 or beyond. Districts should develop their own guidelines and use discretion in accepting official report cards, certificates of completion, or official documentation of attendance when an official transcript is not available. In addition to the foreign transcript or other formal documentation, the MDE recommends that districts consider multiple points of evidence such as interviews and presentations to demonstrate language proficiency.

Languages that Use Fewer than Four Domains/Skills

When proficiency must be determined for languages that use fewer than four language domains/skills, only the language domains/skills that are used with regard to that language will be assessed. The Seal is eligible to be awarded in these languages if the proficiency of Intermediate High has been achieved based on the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines for the language domains/skills tested. Some examples of these languages include American Sign Language, Sylheti, Anishinaabemowin, and Latin.

Timeline for Testing Language Proficiency

Traditional Timeline

The expectation is that language proficiency assessments accurately reflect ACTFL Intermediate High proficiency at the time of graduation. For the purpose of awarding the Seal, the Michigan Department of Education recommends that a student's proficiency be tested beginning his/her second semester of the junior year through the end of the first semester of the senior year. Note that students tested in their senior year may not receive test results until summer of their graduating year. As a result, the Seal will be awarded retroactively following graduation.

Note: Information on available assessments will be regularly updated on the MDE website. Please check periodically for the most recent information.

https://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/MSOB_Assessment_Resources_for_Posting_6_27184_7.pdf

Alternative Timelines

The expectation is that language proficiency assessments accurately reflect ACTFL Intermediate High proficiency at the time of graduation. Students who have documented proficiency at the Intermediate High level before their junior year, such as students in dual immersion programs, transitional bilingual programs, community-based language programs and students beginning language study in grades K-8, may utilize one of the following timelines. Any formal assessment completed before 8th grade cannot be used to qualify for the Seal.

Assessment completed in 8th grade

Number of additional years of language study after assessment	3 years of continued enrollment	2 years enrollment	1-year enrollment or Less
Required documentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Transcript or equivalent official documentation (certificate of completion, letter from language school director, etc...)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">TranscriptAlternative Process for Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Reassess

Assessment completed in 9th Grade

Number of additional years of language study after assessment	2 years enrollment	1-year enrollment or Less
Required documentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transcript 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reassess

Assessment completed in 10th Grade

Number of additional years of language study after assessment	1-year enrollment	Less than 1-year enrollment
Required documentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transcript 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reassess

ALTERNATIVE METHOD OF ASSESSMENT

Overview

For languages without available assessments or in circumstances where test administration is cost prohibitive, students must still demonstrate Intermediate High proficiency in all skills that are applicable. The determination of applicable skills (Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing) must be clearly documented through the MDE approved Alternative Process for Assessment. Assessments should be aligned with the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines for Intermediate High or equivalent.

Recommended Guidelines

The Michigan Department of Education recommends adherence to the guidelines under the Alternative Process for Assessment in Appendix D.

Summary

The purpose of the Michigan Seal of Biliteracy is to serve as an equitable and authentic means to certify attainment of biliteracy for students, employers, and universities. It is crucial for districts to honor this goal by adhering to high standards and rigorous criteria to establish and maintain a credible pathway to obtain this prestigious award.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Student Application

Students who intend to apply for the Michigan Seal of Biliteracy must begin the process at their own school or district. Districts are highly encouraged to develop a simple application process that may include the following components:

- Orientation meeting for students and parents
- On-track for graduation check
- Language check or language inventory
 - Language or languages to be tested

- Tentative testing dates or method to demonstrate proficiency

Once the district has determined the application process, a communication plan should be designed and implemented to ensure equity for all students and parents.

Michigan Seal of Biliteracy Application

The application process will use the Michigan Department of Education GEMS-MARS portal. Public schools, private schools, community-based language programs, and individuals will be able to log in or create a login to submit student applications. The application process requires basic information about the requesting entity, student name, language, type of assessment used, and the acknowledgement of all assurances. These assurances are required and serve as verification that the student has met the minimum requirements of Intermediate High. The assurances are also in lieu of collecting student data (scores, names of assessments) as verification. The application may be submitted by anyone at the entity. Once identified, the individual may begin the application process immediately. An option to upload multiple students at once is also available.

Note: *If a graduating senior was assessed during his/her junior year, scores for this student should be entered during the senior year; however, the GEMS-MARS system does allow for applications to be saved and returned to at a later date.*

MDE's Role

Once student applications have been submitted in GEMS-MARS, the state administrator will access each application and either accept or reject the application. Rejection of an application typically occurs when there are duplicate submissions, or the application is missing required information. Once accepted, the system will automatically generate a link to the following:

- The official MDE Letter of Certification
- The official MDE Pre-Populated Certificate

MDE will mail a gold foil seal with the official embossed Michigan Seal of Biliteracy. The seal could be placed on the certificate, the diploma (if space allows) or on the provided letter.

OUTREACH STRATEGIES

Key to promoting the importance our state's cultural and linguistic capital is the coordination with institutions of higher education and workforce partners. Equally important to promoting this opportunity is providing parents and students with appropriate and timely information about the Seal. This section is designed to provide guidance for developing effective outreach strategies that will reach all stakeholders.

Michigan Department of Education

In support of the Michigan Seal of Biliteracy, the Michigan Department of Education will develop a toolkit to support stakeholders. The toolkit will contain a press release template, customizable PowerPoint presentation, information posters and trifolds, templates for parent and student letters in multiple languages to the greatest extent possible, sample Board resolutions, model transcripts for showcasing the Seal, and advertising strategies.

Michigan Department of Education Outreach

The MDE developed a campaign to advertise the Michigan Seal of Biliteracy. The campaign began with a presentation to the Michigan State Board of Education in January 2018, followed by a press release announcing the availability of the Michigan Seal of Biliteracy to 2018 high school graduates. MDE plans to continue to host multiple public forums with Michigan stakeholders including professional organizations, special interest groups, ISD and LEA representatives, and families to introduce the Seal and provide details on how students may earn it.

MDE created a webpage to host information on the Seal and provide access to necessary resources for districts to apply for the Seal on behalf of their students. Students, parents and districts have access to up-to-date information on acceptable assessments and criteria for measuring biliteracy.

District and Schools

The most direct way to share information about Michigan's Seal of Biliteracy is through district and/or school venues. Because parents and students are directly connected to their schools and districts, information about the Seal can be easily obtained. Outreach strategies could begin with a campaign of distributing information through school counselors, teachers, and other school affiliates such as PTAs and PTOs. Use school event venues such as career day, language day, curriculum night, parents' orientation, and any other gathering that parents and students usually attend.

Districts and schools might develop a plan for sharing information on the Seal on the district and individual school websites. Dedicated web pages can serve to explain the purpose and process for attaining the Seal of Biliteracy, along with any highlights and former recipients. Finally, tap into the social media platforms by creating a page on Facebook or other popular social media apps.

Districts and schools can be proactive by developing a communication plan to announce the Seal. Media outreach to local or regional newspapers, local TV stations, and local radio stations can serve in a way for informing not only parents but the community at large. If available, district cable channels could advertise the Seal of Biliteracy. Press releases, in-person interviews, and panel discussions are all options when working with your local media sources.

Many districts and/or individual schools require regular communication to the home. Consider creating a pamphlet or use the Michigan Department of Education pamphlet in the toolkit to mail out along with advertising other special events such as high school orientation.

Review the following list of ways to conduct effective outreach in your district, school, and community:

- Teachers, schools and districts can work with community agencies to promote the Seal.
- Host an annual Seal of Biliteracy orientation workshop or meeting to educate the parents and students on the process to receive the Seal.
- Host a student competition to develop the most unique and catchy slogan or logo. Use the winning slogan or logo on district websites, school letterhead, in email

signature lines. For example, in its marketing efforts, the State of Illinois adopted the hashtag “#2bilit2quit.”

- Invite Seal of Biliteracy alumni back to their schools as ambassadors. These alumni could talk in assemblies, visit language classrooms, and speak at school, district, and/or public venues and events.
- Utilize school courses such as media classes or project-based learning to develop short vignettes or documentaries on students who are on their journey to receive the Seal or who have already been awarded. Use these short informational videos in various ways.
- Locate the nearest universities to determine if they celebrate a University World Language Day. Seek out a partnership that will assist in your outreach efforts. Additionally, many districts currently celebrate world language week. Explore how your district might institute this practice and develop strategies for sharing information on the Seal.

Districts that house language immersion and/or bilingual programs most often begin the language learning process in the early grades. These schools have a unique advantage in exposing students and parents to the Michigan Seal of Biliteracy. It is highly recommended that students attending language immersion schools and their parents are immediately educated on the Seal and begin working toward the goal of becoming a recipient.

ISDs as Michigan Seal of Biliteracy Liaisons

To begin the outreach process, ISDs should consider identifying a representative/liaison to support LEAs to implement and troubleshoot the process. ISDs could create a common timeline to support local districts to reach out to, identify, assess, and award students that are eligible for the Seal. Finally, the ISD representative/liaison should consider attending the online webinar meetings to share and receive accurate and timely information about the Seal.

Other outreach ideas may include:

- Hosting a Seal of Biliteracy day or week. Oakland Schools has hosted a Seal of Biliteracy Studio Day for teachers and administrators and a Seal of Biliteracy Bootcamp for students.
- Using existing resources and tools. ISDs can feature recorded webinars on their website on both the ESL/Title III and World Languages pages.
- Creating a recurring meeting for local districts to refine their systems around outreach, identification, assessment, and awards for students.

Professional Organizations and Associations

Professional organizations are encouraged to share information on the Michigan Seal of Biliteracy with their members through their existing means of communication, conferences, and other events. This may include providing pertinent information, links, and resources via email, on organization websites, social media and in publications; hosting sessions, workshops, and exhibits on the Seal at conferences or meetings; hosting webinars, chats, and tutorials; publicizing the Seal through press releases and other outreach to media; recognizing students connected to the organization who receive the Seal; recognizing efforts to promote the Seal by members and/or affiliates.

Organizations and associations are also encouraged to collaborate in order to leverage their outreach efforts. The Massachusetts Language Opportunity Coalition (see Electronic Resources) provides a model for inter-organizational collaboration in order to promote language learning opportunities such as the Seal of Biliteracy.

Language Communities

Michigan is the home of numerous language communities which serve as rich and diverse resources. Community leaders are encouraged to promote the Seal of Biliteracy. These languages are valuable to our communities, businesses, and educational institutions.

Language communities have ties to elders, churches, religious organizations, recreational centers, markets, bakeries, restaurants, cultural celebrations, etc. These avenues are important lines to providing access to the Seal. It is possible to seek out the language teachers in the community and introduce them to the Seal of Biliteracy.

Native American Communities

Michigan is home to 12 Federally Recognized Tribes, as well as other American Indian/Alaska Native and First Nations citizens. A primary channel for disseminating and promoting the Seal of Biliteracy can begin with, but not be limited to, the Inter-tribal Council of Michigan.

Collaboration and communication with education coordinators and directors of the respective tribes will be a valuable asset to reaching any and all of our students. Some communities, schools and/or districts may have Native American Advisors who are able to reach students not affiliated with recognized tribes of Michigan and are encouraged to promote and share the Seal of Biliteracy pathway. Community colleges and universities that teach Native American languages may also be important resource contacts. See Appendix A for contact information.

AWARD DESIGN

The Michigan Seal of Biliteracy will be awarded in the form of an official letter, official pre-populated certificate and one gold foil seal. Once the application has been submitted and approved, please return to the same link where the application was submitted to print the certificate and letter of acknowledgment. The gold foil seal will be mailed out within one week of approval to the address associated with the account. The Michigan Seal of Biliteracy may be placed on the diploma and transcript. The approved language for the transcript is "Michigan Seal of Biliteracy Awardee – (name of language other than English)" A sample of the official Michigan Seal of Biliteracy certificate is pictured below:



AWARD PRESENTATION PROCESS

Demonstrating proficiency in English and one or more world languages is a worthy accomplishment. Students who earn the Michigan Seal of Biliteracy should be recognized and celebrated by their peers, teachers, families, communities, and the state. This section provides recommendations on how districts and individual schools might present and publicize the Michigan Seal of Biliteracy.

Venues

Presentation of the Seal may be conducted in a school or district ceremony. There are a number of existing forums for schools and district to consider.

Honors Convocations

Consider using general honors convocation already occurring in departments and programs as a starting point. A special honors convocation only for Seal of Biliteracy could be designed and/or interwoven within existing structures. Additionally, consider developing specific or concurrent honors convocations and induction ceremonies for world languages. Invite local and state government officials, civic leaders, corporate representatives, local business owners, school board members, and press/media

representatives to highlight the awarding of the Seal.

Board Meetings

Local school board meetings can provide an excellent venue to celebrate students' biliteracy accomplishments. Students could receive recognition at board meetings by being presented the Seal. Recognizing students at local school board meetings also accommodates for recognition of students who experience delayed test results, i.e. AP exam scores arriving in summer.

Awards

Districts and schools should consider providing students who earn the Michigan Seal of Biliteracy with a physical award in addition to the digital badge (see Award Design section) to celebrate their accomplishment. Awards may be presented or highlighted at the ceremonies described above. Awards may include items such as digital or printed certificates; gold foil seals to affix to diplomas or certificates; cords, sashes, medals, ribbons, or mortarboard tassels to be worn at graduation or awards ceremonies; patches; trophies.

Communications

It is recommended that information about students who receive the Seal of Biliteracy be announced through the state website and by local district/schools and tribal partners.

The Michigan Department of Education may provide support of the Seal of Biliteracy by posting information on the Department's website with district statistics and maintaining a dedicated webpage to the Seal. The website would feature school and district success stories as well as post-secondary accomplishments of Seal recipients.

Districts, schools, and tribal partners may recognize the Seal of Biliteracy achievement by promoting awardees on local school websites and through social media, local cable networks, tribal and local press releases, the Chambers of Commerce, foundations working with diverse communities, at award and honorary receptions and meetings of local boards of education.

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New American Economy (2017). *Not lost in translation: the growing importance of foreign*

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http://www.leadwithlanguages.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/NAE_Bilingual_V6.pdf

ELECTRONIC RESOURCES

National Guidelines for Implementing the Seal of Biliteracy
http://www.actfl.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/SealofBiliteracyGuidelines_0.pdf

Seal of Biliteracy – Californians Together and Velázquez Press
<http://sealofbiliteracy.org/>

American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL)
<http://www.actfl.org/about-the-american-council-the-teaching-foreign-languages>

ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines 2012
<http://www.actfl.org/publications/guidelines-and-manuals/actfl-proficiency-guidelines-2012>

ACTFL Performance Descriptors for Language Learners
<http://www.actfl.org/publications/guidelines-and-manuals/actfl-performance-descriptors-language-learners>

Massachusetts Language Opportunity Coalition
<https://languageopportunity.org/>

Webinar, Massachusetts
<https://youtu.be/9TcBbtCNdpc>

Language Testing International
<https://www.languagetesting.com/reading-proficiency-test>

National Council of State Supervisors for Languages (NCSSFL)
<http://ncssfl.org/>

NCSSFL/ACTFL Can-Do Statements
<https://www.actfl.org/publications/guidelines-and-manuals/ncssfl-actfl-can-do-statements>

NCSSFL LinguaFolio®
http://www.ncssfl.org/LinguaFolio/index.php?linguafolio_index

Connecticut World Languages, Benefits of Second Language
<http://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/World-Languages/BenefitsofSecondLanguage.pdf>

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Michigan Association of Bilingual Educators

<http://www.mabemi.net/>

Michigan Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages

<http://www.mitesol.org/>

Michigan Association of Secondary School Principals

1001 Centennial Way, Suite 100

Lansing, Michigan 48917

Phone: (517) 327-5315

Fax: (517) 327-5360

<http://mymassp.com/>

Michigan Association of School Boards

1001 Centennial Way, Suite 400

Lansing, Michigan 48917-8249

Phone: (517) 327-5900

<http://www.masb.org/>

Michigan Coalition for Refugee and Immigrant Rights

<http://www.mcirr.org/>

Michigan Elementary and Middle School Principals Association

1980 N College Rd.

Mason, MI 48854

Phone: (517) 694-8955

Fax: (517) 694-8945

<https://memspa.org/>

Michigan School Counselor Association

<http://www.michiganschoolcounselor.org/>

15260 Club Course Dr

Bath, MI 48808

Phone: (517) 719-7801

Michigan World Language Association

<http://miwla.org/home/>

General Education Leadership Network

1001 Centennial Way, Suite 300

Lansing, MI 48917

Phone: (517) 327-5910

<http://www.gomaisa.org/organizations/general-education-leadership-network-geln/>

APPENDIX B

NCSSFL-ACTFL Can-Do Statements

The NCSSFL-ACTFL Can-Do Statements identified in this section should be used to design an appropriate assessment that will meet the **Intermediate High Proficiency**. The Can-Do statements incorporate the national language standards as well as the ACTFL proficiency guidelines. Designing an assessment is only recommended in the absence of an appropriate commercial assessment.

INTERPRETIVE COMMUNICATION INTERMEDIATE HIGH

Proficiency Benchmark

I can understand the main idea and some pieces of information on familiar topics from sentences and series of connected sentences within texts that are spoken, written, or signed.

*What can I understand, interpret or analyze in authentic **informational texts**?*

PERFORMANCE INDICATOR

I can usually follow the main message in various time frames in straightforward, and sometimes descriptive, paragraph-length informational texts.

*What can I understand, interpret or analyze in authentic **fictional texts**?*

PERFORMANCE INDICATOR

I can usually follow the main story and actions expressed in various time frames in paragraph-length fictional texts.

*What can I understand, interpret or analyze in **conversations and discussions**?*

PERFORMANCE INDICATOR

I can usually understand the main idea and flow of events expressed in various time frames in conversations and discussions.

INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION INTERMEDIATE HIGH

Proficiency Benchmark

I can participate in spontaneous spoken, written, or signed conversations on familiar topics, creating sentences and series of sentences to ask and answer a variety of questions.

How can I **exchange information and ideas** in conversations?

PERFORMANCE INDICATOR

I can I can exchange information in conversations and some discussions on a variety of familiar and some concrete topics that I have researched, using connected sentences that may combine to form paragraphs and asking a variety of questions, often across various time frames.

How do I **meet my needs or address situations** in conversations?

PERFORMANCE INDICATOR

I can interact with others to meet my needs in a variety of situations, sometimes involving a complication, using connected sentences that may combine to form paragraphs and asking a variety of questions, often across various time frames.

How can I **express, react to, and support preferences and opinions** in conversations?

PERFORMANCE INDICATOR

I can explain preferences, opinions, and emotions and provide advice on a variety of familiar and some concrete topics that I have researched, using connected sentences that may combine to form paragraphs and asking a variety of questions, often across various time frames.

**PRESENTATIONAL COMMUNICATION
INTERMEDIATE HIGH**

Proficiency Benchmark

I can communicate information, make presentations, and express my thoughts about familiar topics, using sentences and series of connected sentences through spoken, written, or signed language.

How can I present information to **narrate about my life, experience, and events**?

PERFORMANCE INDICATOR

I can tell stories about school and community events and personal experiences, using a few short paragraphs, often across various time frames.

How can I present information to **give a preference, opinion or persuasive argument**?

PERFORMANCE INDICATOR

I can state my viewpoint on familiar or research topics and provide reasons to support it, using a few short paragraphs, often across various time frames.

PERFORMANCE INDICATOR

How can I present information to **inform, describe, or explain?**

I can give detailed presentations on a variety of familiar topics and some concrete topics I have researched, using a few short paragraphs, often across various times

APPENDIX C

The Seal of Biliteracy Alignment to the Top 10 in 10

The Michigan Seal of Biliteracy workgroup developed this document in alignment with the Top 10 in 10 goals. Each of the goals are correlated the purpose and rationale.

Goal 1: Provide every child access to an aligned, high-quality P-20 system from early childhood to postsecondary attainment – through a multi-stakeholder collaboration with business and industry, labor, and higher education – to maximize lifetime learning and success.

Strategy 1.3: Ensure that every Michigan student has the opportunity to take meaningful steps toward their postsecondary career while still in high school, including:

- a) Up to sixty transferable college credits or a recognized industry credential/certificate through access to quality dual enrollment, early middle colleges, and/or career/technical education.
- b) Access to Advanced Placement and/or International Baccalaureate program

Strategy 1.4: Ensure that the P-20 accountability system has aligned expectations and outcomes, and that appropriate data and measures are used to survey the transition of Michigan’s children between various stages of the P-20 pipeline.

Strategy 1.6: Enhanced high school career and college guidance capacity and training to:

- a) Improve college/career readiness, enrollment, and completion metrics.
- b) Align K-12 assessments with post-secondary institution’s entry/readiness requirements.
- c) Encourage voluntary local K-12/higher education partnerships.

Strategy 1.8: Promote active engagement of school leaders in community collaborative efforts leading toward business/industry/labor and philanthropic investment.

Strategy 1.9: Support strong local boards of education, focused on transparency, fiscal responsibility, and raising student achievement, to assure that all students graduate Career- and College-Ready.

Goal 2: Implement, with strong district and building leadership, high-quality instruction in every classroom through a highly coherent, child-centered instructional model where students meet their self-determined academic and personal goals to their highest potential.

Strategy 2.1: Develop and implement a collaborative, integrated, and transparent P-20 personalized learning system for each student in districts and schools.

- a) Align the system to the Michigan Merit Curriculum, Michigan’s Career- and College-Ready standards, and relevant and appropriate personalized learning policy.
- b) Provide guidance so that students, in conjunction with teachers, counselors, and parents, develop individualized goals aligned to their strengths, challenges, and interests.
- c) Develop a coherent assessment system to support the personalization of learning for all students.

Strategy 2.2: Establish and implement with fidelity a high-quality multi-tiered system of supports (universal education).

- a) Develop and implement evidence-based, results-driven programs to meet the needs of all students, including differentiated services and instruction for special populations (and particular focus on English learners, students with disabilities, economically disadvantaged students, and African American students.)

Strategy 2.3: Implement Deeper Learning competencies/experiences across content areas.

Strategy 2.4: Adopt and implement with fidelity, high Career- and College-Ready standards for and expectations of all students and ensure that educators monitor student learning against standards so that results are actionable in real-time.

- a) Ensure a viable curriculum is accessible to all students.
- b) Develop an infrastructure to support the implementation of Deeper Learning pedagogy.

Strategy 2.5: Develop and implement an effective monitoring and feedback system for all stakeholders utilizing reflective dialogue and opportunities for collaboration.

- a) Focus educator effectiveness activities, including observation-based evaluation systems, on the provision of quality feedback to support instruction.
- b) Develop supports for all stakeholders in the P-12 system to incorporate quality feedback that improves learning outcomes.

Strategy 2.6: Ensure that all students within the P-12 system are able to engage in a well-rounded learning experience that builds upon active engagement in language, culture, creativity, and physical activity in an appropriate learning environment.

- a) Develop a P-12 system wherein every student in Michigan graduates with the ability to read, write, speak, and listen in their primary language and at least one additional world language, with certification in languages reflected on their high school diploma/transcript.

Strategy 2.7: Ensure that all P-12 students are able to access and utilize information supports and technologies as learning tools throughout their learning experience.

- a) Ensure that all students have access to libraries and media centers within their school, district, and/or community.
- b) Ensure that such resources are appropriately staffed to ensure system integrity.
- c) Ensure that all students have access to personalized learning technologies that can be used by the learner to enhance and support learning wherever possible.

Strategy 2.8: Provide an integrated system of guidance to develop and support district and school leadership competencies, to accelerate student achievement, including:

- a) A culture and climate of productive learning.
- b) Curriculum, instruction, and assessment supported by technology with necessary classroom level resources provided.

Goal 3: Develop, support, and sustain a high-quality, prepared, and collaborative education workforce

Strategy 3.2: Coherent, state- and district-provided professional development, jointly developed with educators

- a) Major initiatives (such as early literacy, educator evaluations, assessment literacy, and curriculum alignment) will utilize a professional development plan that includes statewide deployment of high-quality professional development to all educators.
- b) All MDE-funded activities that take place on a local or regional level will require a professional learning plan that is aligned to Michigan's professional learning standards.

Strategy 3.3: Fully implement “Michigan’s Plan to Ensure Equitable Access to Excellent Educators” that includes:

- a) Initiatives and interventions designed to attract and retain quality educators in high-needs schools and districts.
- b) Strategic research and evaluation activities to identify shortages in the educator workforce and formulate plans to address them.
- c) Identify areas where additional incentives or supports are needed in the education workforce and develop policies or programs to meet this need.

Strategy 3.4: Address the perception of educators as professionals by improving educator employment conditions; by promoting and celebrating educators; and by collaborating with educators on appropriate policy and programming decisions.

Strategy 3.5: Develop incentives to support teachers remaining in the teaching profession and becoming master teachers.

- a) Support an effort leading to more National Board Certifications for teachers.

Goal 4: Reduce the impact of high-risk factors, including poverty, and provide equitable resources to meet the needs of all students to ensure that they have access to quality educational opportunities

Strategy 4.2: Support extended learning opportunities and activities that are coordinated with other learning programs as part of the P-20 system.

- a) Increase and coordinate opportunities for quality out-of-school time learning aligned with the State Board of Education Michigan Out-of-School Time Standards of Quality.

Strategy 4.5: Develop a system to ensure that all students have equitable access to Career and Technical Education and Special Education resources regardless of where they live and which school they attend.

Strategy 4.7: Implement an assessment and accountability system that reduces the impact of high-risk factors while helping ensure equitable resources. This includes:

- a) An assessment system that includes a focus on growth and measures college-ready standards, along with higher-order thinking, allows for the monitoring of progress over time, and provides actionable data for administrators, teachers, and parents.
- b) A state accountability and support system that focuses on transparency and high standards of accountability for all schools, and that holds schools accountable for closing achievement gaps while dramatically improve systems of support and capacity-building for struggling and chronically low-performing schools

Goal 5: Ensure that parents/guardians are engaged and supported partners in their child’s education.

Strategy 5.1: Develop and implement an authentic family engagement and communications plan that:

- a) Provides information on key education initiatives at the state, community, local, and classroom level.
- b) Supports the Top 10 in 10 goals.
- c) Engages parents actively in education of children.
- d) Provides districts resources to build parent/guardian involvement and engagement.
- e) Develops a campaign that promotes the importance of education and parental involvement.
- f) Meets parents where they are more comfortable – community or cultural centers, places of worship, etc.
- g) Enlists non-education outlets (community groups, commerce, etc.) to communicate the message.

Strategy 5.2: Target authentic family engagement in supporting and monitoring their children’s education and/or behavioral goals.

- a) Encourage districts to implement agreements between parents, the school, educators, and students, signed by each, outlining the academic and personal goals toward each student’s education

Goal 6: Create a strong alignment and partnership with job providers, community colleges, and higher education to assure a prepared and quality future workforce, and informed and responsible citizens.

Strategy 6.1: Coordinate with the Workforce Development Agency, employers, and other stakeholders on strategies to increase internships, work-based learning opportunities, and service learning for students.

Strategy 6.2: Develop policy recommendations so any postsecondary course paid for with state funding will count as college credit at all postsecondary institutions in Michigan.

Strategy 6.4: Align P-20 providers’ efforts with business/industry and workforce development agencies to support job training and soft skills so students are career-ready.

Strategy 6.6: Develop and implement a strategy to better understand and support Michigan public schools’ capacity to provide career- and college-ready coursework and instruction to all students, and how well – including postsecondary and vocational training:

- a) Establish a consortium of postsecondary and vocational training educational entities, K-12 educational entities, K-12 advocacy organizations, labor, and Michigan businesses to:
 - I. Assess needs to strengthen and build capacity in the system.
 - II. Align educational and support systems

Goal 7: Further develop an innovative and cohesive state education agency that supports an aligned, coherent education system at all levels (state, ISD, district, and school).

Strategy 7.1: Work together with the State Board of Education, State Superintendent, and other key stakeholders on education policy issues in order to raise student achievement and support local districts.

- a) Forge and expand partnerships with the legislature and governor to help align legislation, policy, funding, and MDE activities into a coherent system.
- b) Forge and expand partnerships with educational organizations.
- c) Support and implement the recommendations from the Governor’s Special Education Reform Task Force.
- d) Support and implement assessment literacy.

Strategy 7.3: Promote a culture of innovation and continuous improvement within the broad educational system by:

- a) Utilizing the Innovation Council for districts to apply for flexibility/waivers to develop model programs with an emphasis on proactive support rather than punitive measures.
- b) Identifying, promoting, and rewarding the implementation of promising practices throughout the entire educational system by creating an MDE website for promising practices.
- c) Seeking new and creative solutions in support of accelerated student success.
- d) Promoting the development of model classroom
- e) Enacting a research agenda to validate promising practices that should be scaled up.

Strategy 7.4: Develop a customer service culture throughout the MDE.

- a) Strengthen relationships with schools and districts by having MDE staff provide consistent, direct assistance, remove barriers where possible, and celebrate successes.
- b) Strengthen relationship with ISDs and educational organizations by enhancing partnerships and communication channels and emphasizing collaboration.
- c) Increase face-to-face field service visits to provide information up front before monitoring takes place.

Alternative Process for Assessment - MI Seal of Biliteracy

Currently, there are NO commercial language proficiency exams available to assess the level of language proficiency in many languages such as Bengali, Sylheti, Maltese, and Romanian. As a result, this Alternative Process for Assessment has been developed for students who are speakers of less-commonly taught languages.

Reminder: If an [approved commercial assessment](#) is currently available, this Alternative Process for Assessment cannot be used. Districts should explore additional funding sources such as Title IV and community partners.

Exception: When the cost of an approved commercial assessment is prohibitive, such as an exam that may cost more than \$200 per assessment, consult the MDE (MDE-EL@Michigan.gov) to request an exception for approval to use the Alternative Process for Assessment.

Process to Verify Language Proficiency in Languages OTHER than English

Districts/schools must receive approval in order to implement the Alternative Process for Assessment. The verification form (found at the end of this document) must be completed and submitted to the MDE at MDE-EL@Michigan.gov at least one month before the date of the assessment. This form is used to identify the committee members and the materials that will be used. The student outcome section can be filled in after students have been assessed and is not necessary to complete that section upon requesting approval.

It is recommended that a districtwide/school Seal of Biliteracy Committee be developed within each school district or school. This Committee is responsible for the verification of language proficiency for the applicants to the MI Seal of Biliteracy and for ensuring that the individual student applicants for the Seal have at least an Intermediate High proficiency level based on the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines in the four language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Languages that utilize fewer than four domains, such as Latin, ASL, and Sylheti, will only be assessed in the domains that they use. If a commercial assessment is available for less than four domains, supplement with an appropriate approved commercial assessment or use the Alternative Process for Assessment for the missing domains.

In the case where the Alternative Process for Assessment is required, the committee must include a formally trained language speaker and writer of the language who has an understanding of and/or experience using the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines and/or Performance Descriptors for assessment purposes. In order to find a formally trained speaker/writer of the less commonly taught language it is recommended that the district/school reach out to colleges and universities, tribal language departments, embassies or consulates, or professional language schools. In the event that a formally trained language speaker who is also familiar with the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines and/or Performance Descriptors is unable to be identified, an interpreter or translator may be used to assist the Committee in completing the Alternative Process for Assessment and/or interpreting the language used on the assessment. The interpreter's role is simply to

interpret for the Committee, which must include at least one person that has experience using the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines and/or Performance Descriptors for assessment purposes.

The Committee is responsible for the following:

1. Implementation of the Alternative Process for Assessment for listening, speaking, reading, and/or writing when applicable.
 - a. Listening/Reading
 - i. Select authentic, age appropriate resources to verify the language proficiency required to earn the Seal in listening and reading. Such authentic materials are generally available on the Internet, through YouTube and social media.
 - ii. Create questions to assess these materials.
 - iii. The formally trained speaker or an interpreter/translator may assist with the selection of materials and creation of questions.
 - b. Speaking
 - i. Create speaking tasks that verify the level of language proficiency required to earn the Seal in speaking.
 - ii. The formally trained speaker or an interpreter/translator may assist in the interpretation of the oral responses.
 - c. Writing
 - i. Create writing tasks that verify the language proficiency required to earn the Seal in writing.
 - ii. The formally trained speaker or an interpreter/translator may assist in the interpretation of the written response.
2. Archive the assessment tasks as well as the applicant responses to ensure confidentiality and validity of the assessment.

The following prompts are appropriate examples for speaking OR writing tasks at the Intermediate High Level. To create your own assessment tasks, consult the NCSSFL/ACTFL Can-Do Statements.

- Describe a famous person that you admire and/or consider to be a positive role model. Provide supporting details as to why you admire this person.
- Explain what your goals are after you complete high school and what you want to achieve in life (college, work, professional and/or personal life.) Indicate how you plan to overcome the challenges that you may face.
- Describe a recent purchase including what you bought, where you bought it, why you bought it, how much you paid. Provide as much detail as possible.

Recognition: This document has been adapted from the Detroit Public Schools Community District’s Alternative Assessment Process.

2012 ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines Intermediate Level

https://www.actfl.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/public/ACTFLProficiencyGuidelines2012_FINAL.pdf

SPEAKING

INTERMEDIATE

Speakers at the Intermediate level are distinguished primarily by their ability to create with the language when talking about familiar topics related to their daily life. They are able to recombine learned material in order to express personal meaning. Intermediate-level speakers can ask simple questions and can handle a straightforward survival situation. They produce sentence-level language, ranging from discrete sentences to strings of sentences, typically in present time. Intermediate-level speakers are understood by interlocutors who are accustomed to dealing with non-native learners of the language.

Intermediate High

Intermediate High speakers are able to converse with ease and confidence when dealing with the routine tasks and social situations of the Intermediate level. They are able to handle successfully uncomplicated tasks and social situations requiring an exchange of basic information related to their work, school, recreation, particular interests, and areas of competence. Intermediate High speakers can handle a substantial number of tasks associated with the Advanced level, but they are unable to sustain performance of all of these tasks all of the time. Intermediate High speakers can narrate and describe in all major time frames using connected discourse of paragraph length, but not all the time. Typically, when Intermediate High speakers attempt to perform Advanced-level tasks, their speech exhibits one or more features of breakdown, such as the failure to carry out fully the narration or description in the appropriate major time frame, an inability to maintain paragraph-length discourse, or a reduction in breadth and appropriateness of vocabulary. Intermediate High speakers can generally be understood by native speakers unaccustomed to dealing with non-natives, although interference from another language may be evident (e.g., use of code-switching, false cognates, literal translations), and a pattern of gaps in communication may occur.

WRITING

INTERMEDIATE

Writers at the Intermediate level are characterized by the ability to meet practical writing needs, such as simple messages and letters, requests for information, and notes. In addition, they can ask and respond to simple questions in writing. These writers can create with the language and communicate simple facts and ideas in a series of loosely connected sentences on topics of personal interest and social needs. They write primarily in present time. At this level, writers use basic vocabulary and structures to express meaning that is comprehensible to those accustomed to the writing of non-natives.

Intermediate High

Writers at the Intermediate High sublevel are able to meet all practical writing needs of the Intermediate level. Additionally, they can write compositions and simple summaries

related to work and/or school experiences. They can narrate and describe in different time frames when writing about everyday events and situations. These narrations and descriptions are often but not always of paragraph length, and they typically contain some evidence of breakdown in one or more features of the Advanced level. For example, these writers may be inconsistent in the use of appropriate major time markers, resulting in a loss of clarity. The vocabulary, grammar, and style of Intermediate High writers essentially correspond to those of the spoken language. Intermediate High writing, even with numerous and perhaps significant errors, is generally comprehensible to natives not used to the writing of non-natives, but there are likely to be gaps in comprehension.

LISTENING

INTERMEDIATE

At the Intermediate level, listeners can understand information conveyed in simple, sentence-length speech on familiar or everyday topics. They are generally able to comprehend one utterance at a time while engaged in face-to-face conversations or in routine listening tasks such as understanding highly contextualized messages, straightforward announcements, or simple instructions and directions. Listeners rely heavily on redundancy, restatement, paraphrasing, and contextual clues. Intermediate-level listeners understand speech that conveys basic information. This speech is simple, minimally connected, and contains high-frequency vocabulary. Intermediate-level listeners are most accurate in their comprehension when getting meaning from simple, straightforward speech. They are able to comprehend messages found in highly familiar everyday contexts. Intermediate listeners require a controlled listening environment where they hear what they may expect to hear.

Intermediate High

At the Intermediate High sublevel, listeners are able to understand, with ease and confidence, simple sentence-length speech in basic personal and social contexts. They can derive substantial meaning from some connected texts typically understood by Advanced-level listeners although there often will be gaps in understanding due to a limited knowledge of the vocabulary and structures of the spoken language.

READING

INTERMEDIATE

At the Intermediate level, readers can understand information conveyed in simple, predictable, loosely connected texts. Readers rely heavily on contextual clues. They can most easily understand information if the format of the text is familiar, such as in a weather report or a social announcement. Intermediate-level readers are able to understand texts that convey basic information such as that found in announcements, notices, and online bulletin boards and forums. These texts are not complex and have a predictable pattern of presentation. The discourse is minimally connected and primarily organized in individual sentences and strings of sentences containing predominantly high-frequency vocabulary. Intermediate-level readers are most accurate when getting meaning from simple, straightforward texts. They are able to understand messages found in highly familiar, everyday contexts. At this level, readers may not fully understand texts

that are detailed or those texts in which knowledge of language structures is essential in order to understand sequencing, time frame, and chronology.

Intermediate High

At the Intermediate High sublevel, readers are able to understand fully and with ease short, non-complex texts that convey basic information and deal with personal and social topics to which the reader brings personal interest or knowledge. These readers are also able to understand some connected texts featuring description and narration although there will be occasional gaps in understanding due to a limited knowledge of the vocabulary, structures, and writing conventions of the language.

Verification of the Alternative Process for Assessment

School District/Private School:

Biliteracy Seal Committee Lead Name:

Language OTHER than English:

Date: ___/___/___

MI Seal of Biliteracy Committee Members:

	Name	Position
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		

Name of Interpreter:

	Name of Seal of Biliteracy Applicant	ID #	Meets Requirements for the Seal (WRITING) YES - NO	Meets Requirements for the Seal (READING) YES - NO	Meets Requirements for the Seal (LISTENING & SPEAKING) YES - NO	The APPLICANT can APPLY FOR THE SEAL YES - NO
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
7						
8						
9						
10						