

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_FI_NAL.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)	Meets Requirements for the Seal (READING)	Meets Requirements for the Seal (LISTENING & SPEAKING)	The APPLICANT can APPLY FOR THE SEAL
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
7						
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9						
10						