

MICHIGAN SEAL OF BILITERACY

ALTERNATIVE PROCESS FOR ASSESSMENT

Currently, there are NO commercial language proficiency exams available to assess the level of language proficiency in many languages such as Bengali or Sylheti. As a result, this Alternative Process for Assessment has been developed for students who are speakers of less commonly taught languages in order to apply for the Michigan Seal of Biliteracy (MI-SoBL).

REMINDER: If an [approved commercial assessment](#) is currently available, this Alternative Process for Assessment cannot be used.

There are four steps to implement the Alternative Process for Assessment:

1. Apply for approval of committee members and assessment used
2. Upon approval of committee members and assessment, students should be assessed
3. Submit student ratings
4. Upon approval of student ratings, apply for the MI-SoBL

STEP 1: APPLY FOR APPROVAL OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND ASSESSMENT USED

Districts/schools must receive approval in order to implement the Alternative Process for Assessment. The form APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND ASSESSMENT FOR THE ALTERNATIVE PROCESS FOR ASSESSMENT (found at the end of this document) must be completed and submitted to the MDE at MDE-EL@Michigan.gov at least two months before the date of the assessment. Prior to completing the form, schools/districts need to complete the following:

1. Create a committee for implementing the Alternative Process for Assessment
2. Create an assessment that aligns with ACTFL Intermediate High proficiency for the four skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing

The committee must consist of the following types of members:

- a committee chair
- a committee member who has training in and/or experience using the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines for assessment purposes
- a formally trained language speaker and writer of the language. In order to find a formally trained speaker and 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 and writer cannot be identified, an interpreter/translator may be used to assist the Committee. The interpreter's role is simply to interpret for the Committee.
- A member of the school/district language department
- **NOTE:** An individual member can fulfill more than one of the committee roles

STEP 2: UPON APPROVAL OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND ASSESSMENT, STUDENTS SHOULD BE ASSESSED

The committee is responsible for ensuring that each applicant for the MI-SoBL has at least an Intermediate High proficiency level rating based on the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines in the four language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

NOTES:

- Languages that utilize fewer than four domains, such as Latin, ASL, and Sylheti, are only assessed in the domains used. If an approved commercial assessment is available for any of the four domains, schools/districts must use the approved commercial assessment and supplement with the Alternative Process for Assessment for the missing domains.
- 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.

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 MI-SoBL in listening and reading. Such authentic materials are generally available on the Internet, through YouTube and social media.
 - ii. Create items and/or 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 MI-SoBL 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 MI-SoBL 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: *The committee responsibilities and prompts have been adapted from the Detroit Public Schools Community District's Alternative Assessment Process.*

STEP 3: VERIFICATION OF STUDENT ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Districts/schools must receive approval for student assessment ratings prior to applying for the MI-SoBL. The form VERIFICATION OF STUDENT ASSESSMENT RATINGS (found at the end of this document) must be completed and submitted to the MDE at MDE-EL@Michigan.gov. Once the Student Assessment Ratings are approved, schools/districts may submit an application to receive the MI-SoBL. **NOTE:** Use one verification form for each language assessed.

STEP 4: UPON APPROVAL OF STUDENT RATINGS, APPLY FOR THE MI-SOBL

Use the MI-SoBL application portal found on the Educators page and Families page of the Michigan Seal of Biliteracy [website](#). Follow the steps under the "Apply Now" section.

ACTFL PROFICIENCY GUIDELINES 2024

INTERMEDIATE HIGH LEVEL

Included here are the 2024 ACTFL Guidelines for the Intermediate High Level, the minimum required proficiency level for the Michigan Seal of Biliteracy. The complete Proficiency Guidelines are available on the ACTFL website: [ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines 2024](#)

SPEAKING: INTERMEDIATE HIGH

Speakers at the Intermediate High sublevel are able to converse with ease and confidence when dealing with routine tasks and social situations that require an exchange of basic information related to their work, school, recreation, particular interests, and areas of competence. The breadth of their vocabulary and language control reduces the need for pauses and reformulations when they speak on such topics. The influence of other languages that they know may be evident in their articulation, stress, and intonation patterns, but rarely interferes with successful communication.

At the Intermediate High sublevel, 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. They often can narrate and describe in all major time frames using connected discourse of paragraph length. When they do so, their speech exhibits one or more features of breakdown, such as inability to fully carry out narration or description in the appropriate major time frame, difficulty maintaining paragraph-length discourse, or a reduction in breadth and appropriateness of vocabulary.

WRITING: INTERMEDIATE HIGH

Writers at the Intermediate High sublevel are able to meet all practical writing needs of the Intermediate level, including routine transactional tasks and social situations that require an exchange of basic information related to work, school, recreation, individual interests, and areas of competence. The breadth of their vocabulary and language control is sufficient to ensure successful communication. Additionally, these writers can demonstrate an Advanced-level ability to write paragraph-length compositions and simple summaries related to work and/or school experiences but cannot do this all of the time. They can narrate and describe in different time frames when writing about everyday events and situations, but their writing exhibits some challenges in structure or vocabulary use when they do so.

LISTENING: INTERMEDIATE HIGH

At the Intermediate High sublevel, individuals 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 passages typically understood by listeners at the Advanced level. However, there often will be gaps in understanding due to limited knowledge of the vocabulary and structures of the spoken language.

READING: 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 as readers at the Advanced level do, although there will be occasional gaps in understanding due to a limited knowledge of the vocabulary, structures, and writing conventions of the language.

APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND ASSESSMENT FOR THE ALTERNATIVE PROCESS FOR ASSESSMENT

DATE OF APPLICATION:

SCHOOL DISTRICT/PRIVATE SCHOOL:

LANGUAGE REQUESTED FOR ALTERNATIVE PROCESS:

INFORMATION ABOUT ASSESSMENT TO BE USED:

- ASSESSMENT SKILLS/DOMAINS CREATED BY SCHOOL/DISTRICT AND/OR NAME OF VENDOR
- **NOTE: A COPY OF THE ASSESSMENT TO BE USED MUST BE SUBMITTED WITH THIS APPLICATION**

COMMITTEE MEMBERS FOR ALTERNATIVE PROCESS FOR ASSESSMENT

Committee Chair

NAME:

EMAIL:

PHONE:

Formally Trained Speaker of the Language Requested

NAME:

EMAIL:

PHONE:

Formally Trained Speaker of the Language Requested

NAME:

EMAIL:

PHONE:

ACTFL Proficiency Trained Member

NAME:

EMAIL:

PHONE:

Other Member (Optional)

NAME:

EMAIL:

PHONE:

Other Member (Optional)

NAME:

EMAIL:

PHONE:

VERIFICATION OF STUDENT ASSESSMENT RATINGS

DATE OF APPLICATION:

SCHOOL DISTRICT/PRIVATE SCHOOL:

LANGUAGE USED FOR ASSESSMENT:

DATE OF APPROVAL FOR ALTERNATIVE PROCESS:

INFORMATION ABOUT ASSESSMENT USED:

- **ASSESSMENT SKILLS/DOMAINS CREATED BY SCHOOL/DISTRICT AND/OR NAME OF VENDOR:**

PERSON SUBMITTING APPLICATION AND CONTACT INFORMATION:

- **NAME:**
- **EMAIL ADDRESS:**
- **PHONE:**

APPLICANT INFORMATION

NAME OF MI-SOBL APPLICANT	STUDENT UIC NUMBER	LISTENING Meets Requirement YES / NO	SPEAKING Meets Requirement YES / NO	READING Meets Requirement YES / NO	WRITING Meets Requirement YES / NO	APPLICANT MEETS ALL LANGUAGE CRITERIA YES / NO
1.						
2.						
3.						
4.						
5.						
6.						
7.						
8.						