

## START LANGUAGE STUDY EARLY AND EARN THE MICHIGAN SEAL OF BILITERACY!

The **Michigan Seal of Biliteracy** is an award given in recognition of students who have studied and attained proficiency in English and one additional world language by high school graduation.

The Seal of Biliteracy has been created to encourage students to study world languages and embrace their native and heritage languages.

The Michigan Seal of Biliteracy will provide employers with a way to identify individuals with strong language and biliteracy skills. It may serve as an additional tool for colleges and universities to recognize applicants' language abilities for admission and placement.

The Michigan Seal of Biliteracy requires students to meet the following criteria.

- meet all high school graduation requirements
- demonstrate intermediate high proficiency on an approved world language assessment

Students who begin their language study in elementary or middle school and continue the study of that same language in high school are well on the path to achieving the Seal of Biliteracy.



## The ABCs of Early Language Learning: Advantages, Benefits, and Careers

This brochure has been prepared for elementary teachers, counselors, and administrators, as well as parents and community members to inform them about the many benefits of early language learning and the Michigan Seal of Biliteracy.

For more information visit the [MDE website](#) or contact:

Kelly Alvarez

AlvarezK@michigan.gov

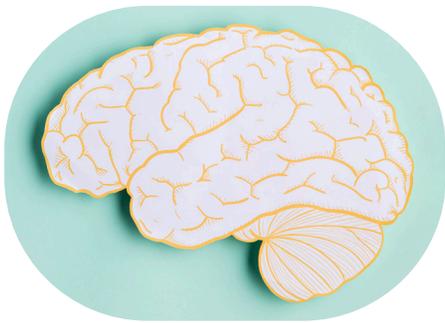
(517) 241-5392

The Michigan Seal of Biliteracy is a voluntary program.

doctor, engineer,  
nurse, architect,  
translator, event planner,  
judge, marketing  
specialist...?



**MICHIGAN**  
Department  
of **Education**



## Advantages and Benefits

Studies show that learning an additional language BOOSTS BRAIN POWER...

- Children learn an additional language more naturally and quickly, and have more native-like pronunciation.
- Students who are multilingual score higher on standardized exams in math, reading comprehension and vocabulary compared to monolingual students.
- Learning an additional language offers proven benefits for intelligence, concentration and delayed risks of dementia and Alzheimer's disease.
- People who speak more than one language have better memory and memorization skills, including better working memory.
- Children and adults who speak more than one language exhibit greater mental flexibility and can switch between tasks more quickly.

Studies show that learning a second language ENHANCES EMPATHY AND UNDERSTANDING...

- It increases cultural awareness and provides for enriched interpersonal exchanges and experiences.
- It creates a stronger sense of community.
- It fosters a more global perspective.
- It provides social and emotional benefits such as better self-control.

## Careers

Studies show that learning an additional language CREATES CAREER OPPORTUNITIES...

- Knowing an additional language helps to improve your overall employability.
- 9 out of 10 U.S. employers rely on employees with language skills other than English.
- A majority of U.S. employers say that their employees use their world language skills to communicate both externally and internally in order to conduct business.
- Between 2010 and 2015, the number of U.S. job postings specifically geared toward bilingual candidates more than doubled.
- 66% of executives in the U.S. speak more than one language.
- 66% of North American recruiters say bilingualism will grow in importance in the next 10 years.
- Learning a language has been shown to add 10-15% to your salary.
- 1 in 4 U.S. employers lost business due to a lack of world language skills.
- 1 in 3 world language-dependent U.S. employers reported a language skills gap.

## K-5 Program Types

### Elementary Program Models:

- FLES (Foreign Language in the Elementary School):
  - » It is at least 30 minutes per day, 3 times or more per week.
- FLEX (Foreign Language Exploratory):
  - » The instruction occurs less than 3 times per week for 45 minutes or less.
- Immersion:
  - » At least 50% of instruction during the school day must be conducted in a world language other than English.
  - » Immersion programs must offer both English Language Arts and content instruction in the world language (e.g. math, science, social studies, music, physical education, etc.).

## 6-8 Program Types

### Middle School Models:

Grades 6-8:

- Exploratory Model:
  - » The students receive very basic instruction in several languages over a school semester or year.
  - » The course is non-credit and does not fulfill any of the language requirement.

Grades 7-8:

- A level one and/or level two world language course is taught in middle school with the same curriculum as high school courses.
- There is successful completion of the course(s) earning one or both credits required by the state.
- There are four basic models for middle school programs that offer high school credit.
  - » level one offered in Grade 8
  - » level one offered in Grade 7 and level two in Grade 8
  - » level one begins in Grade 7 and continues through Grade 8
  - » level one offered across Grades 6 and 7

