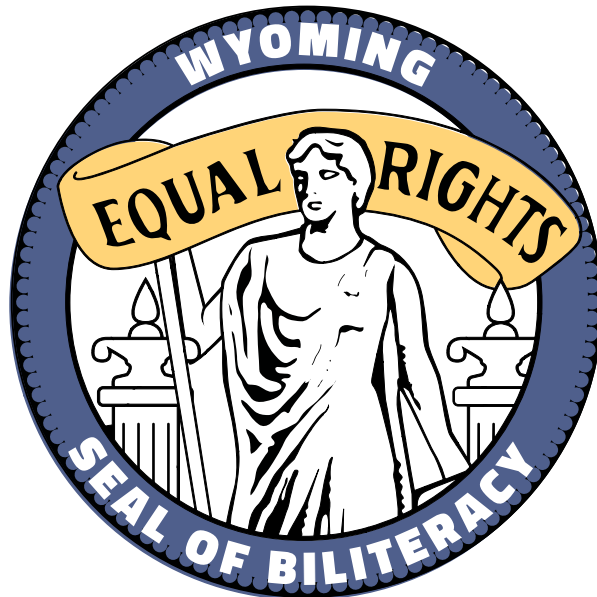


# WDE WY-SoBL

## WYOMING'S STATE SEAL OF BILITERACY GUIDANCE

OCTOBER 2023



Wyoming Department of Education

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The languages offered in each test change often; districts should check test websites annually

## Introduction

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The Wyoming Seal of Biliteracy is an award given by the Wyoming Department of Education (WDE) in recognition of students who have studied and attained proficiency in English and one or more additional language(s) by high school graduation. The Wyoming Seal of Biliteracy (WY-SoBL) encourages students to pursue biliteracy, honors the skills our students attain, and can be evidence of skills that are attractive to future employers and college admissions offices. Students can earn the Wyoming State Seal of Biliteracy or the State Seal of Biliteracy with Advanced Distinction, based on the level students demonstrated on the approved language assessments.

The Wyoming State Seal of Biliteracy was established by the 2022 Wyoming Legislature upon passage of [Senate Enrolled Act 47](#), which was signed into law by Governor Mark Gordon on March 21, 2022. It became effective July 1, 2022. For questions, email Antoinette Hallam, Assessment Consultant, at [antoinette.hallam@wyo.gov](mailto:antoinette.hallam@wyo.gov).

Aims of the Seal:

- Encourage students to study and master languages.
- Certify attainment of biliteracy skills.
- Recognize the value of language diversity.
- Provide employers with a method of identifying people with language and biliteracy skills.
- Provide universities with a method to recognize and give credit to applicants for the attainment of high-level skills in languages.
- Prepare students with skills that will benefit them in the labor market and the global society.
- Strengthen intergroup communication and honor the multiple cultures and languages in a community.

Students who earn the Wyoming Seal of Biliteracy (WY-SoBL) demonstrate language skills in both English and another World Language that are often necessary to succeed in multilingual, post-secondary academic and professional settings.

The WY-SoBL also indicates to students and their families that their language(s) and culture(s) are valued. Students of all language backgrounds, including English Learners, former English Learners, heritage speakers, signers of world languages, and students from monolingual, English-speaking homes who have acquired world languages at school or in the community, are eligible for the Wyoming Seal of Biliteracy and the Seal with Advanced Distinction. The WY-SoBL recognizes all dialects of world languages and does not elevate any one over another. The WY-SoBL thus supports academic achievement for all and recognizes students for the multilingual skills they possess.

All schools, public, charter, private, and home, may choose to participate in the WY-SoBL through the state established process.

Districts may consider if Title I funds or Title IV, Part A funds may be used to cover world language assessment fees for students.

For more information at the national level, check out the national [Seal of Biliteracy FAQ webpage](#).

## Definition of Terms

<b>American Sign Language (ASL)</b>	American Sign Language (ASL) is a complete, natural language that has the same linguistic properties as spoken languages, with grammar that differs from English. ASL is expressed by movements of the hands and face. It is the primary <b>language</b> of many North Americans who are deaf and hard of hearing and is used by some hearing people as well.
<b>Active English Learner</b>	Students with limited proficiency in the English language.
<b>Bilingual</b>	A bilingual person is someone who speaks two or more languages.
<b>Biliterate</b>	A biliterate student can read, write, and comprehend content as well as speak.
<b>Classical Language</b>	Any language with an independent literary tradition and a large and ancient body of written literature.
<b>Former English Learner (EL)</b>	A student who reached English proficiency and was exited from Active EL status.
<b>Heritage Speaker</b>	Speaks/understands a language of one's ancestry or culture that is not the primary language of the community.
<b>Multilingual</b>	Speaks two or more languages.
<b>Native American Indigenous Language</b>	The first language a person has been exposed to from birth or in the early years; almost always the language that is spoken where one is born.
<b>Seal of Biliteracy</b>	The Seal of Biliteracy is an award for students who demonstrate academic proficiency in English and at least one other language. (See Tables 1 and 2 for approved assessments and level of proficiency.)
<b>Seal of Biliteracy District Coordinator</b>	The Seal of Biliteracy is an award for students who demonstrate academic proficiency in English and at least one other language. (See Tables 1 and 2 for approved assessments and level of proficiency.)
<b>Seal of Biliteracy with Advanced Distinction</b>	The Advanced Distinction Seal of Biliteracy is an award for students who demonstrate a higher level of academic proficiency in English and at least one other language. (See Tables 1 and 2 for approved assessments and level of proficiency.)
<b>World Language</b>	Any language other than English, which includes American Sign Language (ASL), classical languages, and indigenous languages.

## The Wyoming Department of Education’s Role in the Administration of the Wyoming Seal of Biliteracy

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District or school staff are responsible for the local administration of the Wyoming State Seal of Biliteracy (WY-SoBL) program. The role of the Wyoming Department of Education is to:

- Identify a WDE SoBL Consultant for Seal of Biliteracy oversight and data collection at the state level, with experience in World Languages, English Language Development, and/or state assessments.
- Design and establish a Wyoming Seal of Biliteracy and an Advanced Distinction Wyoming Seal of Biliteracy for conferral by a school district to a graduating high school student who is proficient in English and one (1) or more world languages.
- Develop policies as necessary regarding the use and appearance of the Wyoming Seal of Biliteracy and the Seal with Advanced Distinction on student transcripts. Develop policies as necessary regarding the use and appearance of the Wyoming Seal of Biliteracy and the Seal with Advanced Distinction.
- Provide definitions to Seal of Biliteracy terminology.
- Create data-collection systems to collect District SoBL information through the WDE505 and WDE 950 in the [Data Suite Collection](#).
- Collect and summarize statewide data and provide to national, state, and local stakeholders.
- Maintain WDE Seal of Biliteracy webpage.
- Ongoing collaboration with stakeholders to successfully implement the SoBL Program.
- Update this guidance and provide assistance to school districts, as needed.
- Provide districts with special recognition awards such as: SoBL cords to wear at graduation, SoBL certificate and embossed seals for diplomas.

## Criteria for Students to Earn the Wyoming Seal of Biliteracy

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A student must be a candidate for high school graduation before being considered to receive the Wyoming Seal of Biliteracy. Wyoming Graduation Requirements, per W.S.21-2-304(a)(iii), include the successful completion of four (4) school years of English Language Arts; three (3) school years of mathematics; three (3) school years of science; and three (3) school years of social studies, including history, American government and economic systems and institutions.

There are three requirements for a student to earn the WY-SoBL

1. Meet all Wyoming graduation requirements.
2. Demonstrate proficiency in one of the English Assessments found in Table 1.
3. Demonstrate proficiency in one or more of the World Language Assessments found in Table 2.

In order to receive the Seal with Advanced Distinction, a student must meet the requirements for Advanced Distinction in **both** English and another language.

## District Steps to Implement the Wyoming Seal of Biliteracy

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Districts must do the following for the implementation of the WY-SoBL:

1. Read this **WY-SoBL Guidance** document thoroughly and visit the [WDE WY-SoBL Webpage](#) for updates.
2. Identify a **SoBL District Coordinator** as the point of contact for the WY-SoBL.
3. Establish a **SoBL District Team** (such as Counselors, English Learner teachers, World Language teachers, etc.) and team roles and duties to implement the WY-SoBL. (\*See Additional District Options section below.)
  - a. Plan the implementation and communication of the program to students, parents, teachers, and community members.
  - b. Establish when assessments will be offered throughout the school year.
  - c. Facilitate the administration of English and World Language Assessments, ensuring student access to various assessments.
  - d. Maintain records of student scores, report the required data to the WDE, and communicate with the WDE, as needed.
  - e. Place foil seals for the WY-SoBL on the diploma for students who satisfy all criteria for the respective award(s).
4. Complete the [District Intent to Participate Form](#) annually by December 15.
5. Complete the [District Internal Application](#) for each student. This document is intended for planning and recording purposes to track student progress. It should be signed by the Counselor, SoBL Coordinator, and Principal and filed within the district as it deems appropriate.
6. Complete [WY-SoBL Order Form for Foil Seals](#) - Districts should complete this order form **at least 30 days before expected graduation** with the estimated number of foil seals needed for diplomas.
7. Complete the [WDE505 collection](#) twice a year - once in the fall and once in the spring during the collection periods.
8. The district will complete the [WDE950 collection](#) for Transcripts for Graduating Students during the collection window.

### Additional District Options to Implement the WY-SoBL

Districts **may** consider the following options in the implementation of the WY-SoBL:

8. Consider district pathways to achieve the WY-SoBL, if desired.
9. Suggestions for **district communication / advertising** of WY-SoBL:
  - a. Provide annual written notification / information to all stakeholders to include teachers, principals, counselors, parents, guardians, and students about the WY-SoBL to gather support. Examples can include explaining the benefits at parent night with enrollment information and other family engagement opportunities.
    - i. Notification may include the purposes of the WY-SoBL and eligibility requirements, in a language that the parent or legal guardian can understand.
  - b. Counselors should include the WY-SoBL in discussions with goal setting in the beginning of middle school (or earlier) and high school.
  - c. Teachers publicize in their classes and hang posters and information flyers.
  - d. District world language coordinator or counselor visits all upper level language classes to explain the benefits and logistics of the WY-SoBL.

- e. Email all freshmen to gain interest in and plan for the WY-SoBL, as well as juniors / seniors and their parents.
  - f. Send a letter home to students meeting English requirements and enrolled in world language study programs.
10. Recognize recipients of the WY-SoBL as part of graduation or senior award ceremonies.

## Assessments for Demonstrating Proficiency in English

Students must show proficiency in one of the following approved English Language Assessments. In order to receive the Seal with Advanced Distinction, a student must meet the requirements for Advanced Distinction in both English and another language.

If an approved commercial assessment is currently available, alternative methods of assessment – such as creating a portfolio or performing community service – **may not** be used.

Table 1: Criteria to be met in grade 9-12

English Assessment	Minimum Score for Wyoming Seal of Biliteracy	Minimum Score for Seal with Advanced Distinction
ACT	ELA Composite 18	ELA Composite 22
AP English Language & Composition	3	4
AP English Literature	3	4
<b><u>IB Language B Standard Level (SL)</u></b>	5	6
<b><u>IB Language B Higher Level (HL)</u></b>	4	5
SAT - College Board	480 on Evidence-based R&W	600 on Evidence-based R&W
<b><u>AAPPL - ACTFL</u></b> Assessment of Performance toward Proficiency in Languages	Intermediate-Mid (1-2 in each of the 4 domains)	Intermediate-High (1-5 in each of the 4 domains)
<b><u>STAMP 4S</u></b> - Standards-based Measurement of Proficiency (Four-skill (Reading, Writing, Listening, and Speaking)	Intermediate-Mid (5 in each of the 4 domains)	Intermediate-High (6 in each of the 4 domains)

## Assessments for Demonstrating Proficiency in a World Language

Students must show proficiency in at least one of the following approved World Language Assessments, in the four areas of communication: Speaking, Listening, Reading, and Writing. In order to receive the Seal with Advanced Distinction, a student must meet the requirements for Advanced Distinction in both English and another language.

Table 2. Criteria to be met in grade 11 or 12

World Language Assessment	World Language(s) Assessed	Minimum Score for Wyoming Seal of Biliteracy	Minimum Score for Seal with Advanced Distinction
<a href="#">AAPPL - ACTFL</a> Assessment of Performance towards proficiency in Languages	Arabic, Mandarin Chinese (Traditional or Simplified), French, German, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Portuguese, Spanish	Intermediate-Mid (1-2 in each of the 4 domains)	Intermediate-High (1-5 in each of the 4 domains)
<a href="#">ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) and Writing Proficiency Test, (WPT)</a>	Albanian, Amharic, Bangla, Bosnian, Bulgarian, Cantonese, Croatian, Dari, Gujarati, Haitian Creole, Hebrew, Hindi, Malayalam, Pashto, Polish, Russian, Swahili, Tagalog, Tamil, Thai, Turkish, Ukrainian, Urdu, Vietnamese, Yoruba	Intermediate-Mid on both the OPI and the WPT	Intermediate-High on both the OPI and the WPT
<a href="#">AP World Language &amp; Culture Exam</a>	Mandarin Chinese (Traditional or Simplified), French, German, Italian, Japanese, Latin, Spanish	3	4
<a href="#">AP World Language Literature &amp; Culture Exam</a>		3	4
<a href="#">IB Language B Standard Level (SL)</a>	French, Spanish and Mandarin	5	6
<a href="#">IB Language B Higher Level (HL)</a>	NOTE: Students must be enrolled in an IB program in order to take this test.	4	5
<a href="#">STAMP 4S</a> - Standards-based Measurement of Proficiency	Arabic, Mandarin Chinese (Traditional or Simplified), French, German, Hebrew, Hindi, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Polish, Portuguese (Brazilian), Russian, Spanish	Intermediate-Mid (5 in each of the 4 domains)	Intermediate-High (6 in each of the 4 domains)
<a href="#">ASLPI</a> - ASL Proficiency Interview (American Sign Language)		Level 4	Level 5
<a href="#">ASLPI</a> - Sign Language Proficiency Interview		Intermediate	Intermediate Plus
Native American Language Assessments	<a href="#">Navajo Resource Doc for Tribal Languages</a>	Navajo 3	Navajo 4
<b>Non-Written Languages:</b> Language Recognition for Indigenous/ Heritage Languages (includes WY's Indigenous Languages - Northern Arapaho & Eastern Shoshone; also includes Indigenous Sign Language (ISL))	Interpersonal face-to-face communication; interpretive listening; presentational speaking; writing and reading where written code exists. Each tribe determines the level of proficiency students need to be considered proficient and advanced.	Native American Elders/community members (for heritage language) would evaluate through portfolio demonstration + virtual/face-to-face conversation to demonstrate communication skills.	



## Native American Languages

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A variety of tribal languages exist. School districts are encouraged to collaborate with tribes to develop the method for demonstrating proficiency and to identify the tribal member(s) who will evaluate the students' performance.

Additional information can be found on the Council of Chief State School Officers [guidance](#) for orally assessing Native American Languages. For questions regarding Native American Languages, please contact Rob Black, Social Studies/ Native American Consultant, at [rob.black1@wyo.gov](mailto:rob.black1@wyo.gov).

## Student Recognition - Foil Seals, Cords, and Transcripts

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The Wyoming Department of Education will provide embossed foil seals for districts to affix to student diplomas. The WDE anticipates support for graduation cords from the Wyoming Association of Language Teachers (WALT) as well. Information will be forthcoming after their fall conference and if approved, will be added to the order form referenced in #1 below. As students meet the WY-SoBL requirements, districts should do the following:

1. Order foil seals from the WDE to affix to students' diplomas. The order form is found on the [WY-SoBL page](#) and should be **completed at least 30 days before graduation**. If final results are not in at this point for all students, districts will need to make their best guess for ordering but should wait until assessment results are finalized to affix foil seals to diplomas. In order to receive the Seal with Advanced Distinction, a student must meet the requirements for Advanced Distinction in **both** English and another language.
2. Complete the [WDE950](#) in order to add the Seal of Biliteracy to the students' 2022-23 transcripts. More information and the instructions for this data collection will be provided on the WDE Data Suite page, once available. Changes to the data collection will be shared with the student information system providers.

The following are some additional options and suggestions for districts to honor students who will be receiving the Seal of Biliteracy.

- Hold an awards event in April or May for those students who are expected to earn the Wyoming Seal of Biliteracy.
- Add a symbol in the graduation program that indicates the student has earned or is a candidate for the Wyoming Seal of Biliteracy or the Seal of Biliteracy with Advanced Distinction.
- Decorate student lockers to celebrate their achievement.
- Hang banners in the school naming awardees.

Recognition: Thanks to the Massachusetts Department of Education for sharing their SoBL Guidance from which this document was adapted.