



TOM TORLAKSON

STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

CALIFORNIA
DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION

February 22, 2016

Dear County and District Superintendents and Direct-Funded Charter School Administrators:

PROCEDURES FOR AWARDING THE STATE SEAL OF BILITERACY

The State Seal of Biliteracy (SSB), codified in California *Education Code (EC)* sections 51460–51464, provides recognition to high school students who have demonstrated proficiency in speaking, reading, and writing in one or more languages in addition to English. Each school district, county office of education (COE), or direct-funded charter school that confers the SSB is required to maintain appropriate records in order to identify students who have met the established criteria for the award and to affix the SSB insignia to the diploma or transcript of each qualifying student.

Per *EC* Section 51461(a), to qualify for the SSB, high school graduates must meet all of the following criteria:

1. Completion of all English Language Arts requirements for graduation with an overall grade point average of 2.0 or above in those classes.
2. Passing the California Standards Test in English Language Arts administered in grade eleven at the Proficient level or above. (Interim eligibility requirements for this criterion are on the California Department of Education [CDE] SSB Web page at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/el/er/sealofbiliteracy.asp>.)
3. Proficiency in one or more languages in addition to English, demonstrated through one of the following methods:
 - (A) Passing a foreign language Advanced Placement (AP) examination with a score of 3 or higher or an International Baccalaureate examination with a score of 4 or higher.
 - (B) Successful completion of a four-year high school course of study in a foreign (world) language and attainment of an overall grade point average of 3.0 or above in that course of study.
 - (C) If no AP examination or off-the-shelf language test exists and the school district can certify to the State Superintendent of Public Instruction (SSPI)

that the test meets the rigor of a four-year high school course of study in that foreign (world) language, passing a school district language examination that, at a minimum, assesses speaking, reading, and writing in a language other than English at the Proficient level or higher. If a school district offers an examination in a language in which an AP examination or off-the-shelf language test does exist, the school district language examination shall be approved by the SSPI for the purpose of determining proficiency in a language other than English.

(D) Passing the Scholastic Assessment Test II Foreign Language Examination with a score of 600 or higher.

Per *EC* Section 51461(b), if the primary language of a pupil in any of grades nine through twelve (inclusive) is other than English, he or she shall do both of the following in order to qualify for the SSB:

- (1) Attain the early advanced proficiency level on the California English Language Development Test (CELDT). For the purpose of determining SSB eligibility, a participating school district may administer the CELDT test an additional time as necessary.
- (2) Meet all the criteria listed above in *EC* sections 51461(a)(1)(2) and (3).

It is recommended that everyone involved in collecting data and implementing the SSB in their district read *EC* sections 51460–51464 in their entirety, which are available on the California Legislative Information Web site at <http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes.xhtml>.

Frequently asked questions and the following documents are available on the CDE SSB Web page at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/el/er/sealofbilitery.asp>

- **SSB Requirements Checklist** (This checklist is for local use only. Please do not submit this checklist to the CDE.) School district, COE, and direct-funded charter school staff may use this spreadsheet to identify graduating students who meet the SSB criteria.
- **SSB Insignia Request Form** (Submit this form to the CDE.) School district, COE, and direct-funded charter school staff must complete this form and submit it to the CDE English Learner Support Division to request the diploma insignias for eligible students.

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After identifying graduating high school students who qualify for the SSB, the district superintendent or direct-funded charter school administrator must sign and submit the Insignia Request Form and mail it to the following address:

California Department of Education
English Learner Support Division
State Seal of Biliteracy
1430 N Street, Suite 2204
Sacramento, CA 95814

The CDE will process requests for insignias for the 2015–16 school year upon receipt. While there is no deadline for submitting the form, please submit requests far enough in advance of the date of the first graduation ceremony to allow time for the CDE to process the requests and for school staff to affix the insignias to the diplomas. Please allow at least four weeks for processing and delivery.

Please share this information with your designated staff responsible for SSB implementation such as high school principals, administrators, World Language Department chairs, and English Learner Program directors. If you have questions regarding the SSB, please contact the Language Policy and Leadership Office by phone at 916-319-0845 or by e-mail at SEAL@cde.ca.gov.

Sincerely,



Tom Torlakson

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2016-00712