

RCW 28A.300.575 Washington state seal of biliteracy. (1) The Washington state seal of biliteracy is established to recognize public high school graduates who have attained a high level of proficiency in speaking, reading, and writing in one or more world languages in addition to English. School districts are encouraged to award the seal of biliteracy to graduating high school students who meet the criteria established by the office of the superintendent of public instruction under this section. Participating school districts shall place a notation on a student's high school diploma and high school transcript indicating that the student has earned the seal.

(2) The office of the superintendent of public instruction shall adopt rules establishing criteria for award of the Washington state seal of biliteracy. The criteria must require a student to demonstrate proficiency in English by meeting state high school graduation requirements in English, including through state assessments and credits, and proficiency in one or more world languages other than English. The criteria must permit a student to demonstrate proficiency in another world language through multiple methods including nationally or internationally recognized language proficiency tests and competency-based world language credits awarded under the model policy adopted by the Washington state school directors' association.

(3) For the purposes of this section, a world language other than English must include American sign language and Native American languages. [2014 c 102 § 2.]

Findings—Intent—2014 c 102: "(1) The legislature finds that:

(a) The study of world languages in elementary and secondary schools should be encouraged because it contributes to students' cognitive development and to the national economy and security;

(b) Proficiency in multiple languages enables Washington to participate more effectively in the current global political, social, and economic context;

(c) The benefits to employers of having employees who are fluent in more than one language are clear: Increased access to expanding markets, better service of customers' needs, and expanded trading opportunities with other countries; and

(d) Protecting the state's rich heritage of multiple cultures and languages, as well as building trust and understanding across the multiple cultures and languages of diverse communities, requires multilingual communication skills.

(2) Therefore, the legislature's intent is to promote and recognize linguistic proficiency and cultural literacy in one or more world languages in addition to English through the establishment of a Washington state seal of biliteracy." [2014 c 102 § 1.]