

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 English and in one or more world languages other than English. Beginning with the 2025-26 school year, school districts shall 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. 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 of biliteracy.

(2) (a) The office of the superintendent of public instruction shall adopt rules establishing criteria for award of the Washington state seal of biliteracy.

(b) The criteria must require a student to demonstrate both:

(i) Proficiency in English by meeting state high school graduation requirements in English, including through state assessments and credits; and

(ii) (A) Except as provided in (b) (ii) (B) of this subsection (2), proficiency in speaking, reading, and writing one or more world languages other than English.

(B) For a world language other than English that is an unwritten language, the criteria must only require a student to demonstrate proficiency in speaking the unwritten language.

(c) (i) Except as provided in (c) (ii) of this subsection (2), the criteria must permit a student to demonstrate proficiency in a world language other than English 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.

(ii) For a world language other than English that is an indigenous language, the criteria must specify that only a sovereign tribal government may certify a student as proficient in the language of the tribe.

(3) The office of the superintendent of public instruction shall provide students with access to methods for the student to demonstrate proficiency in less commonly taught or assessed languages at a cost that is not higher than that of assessing commonly taught or assessed languages.

(4) This section governs school operation and management under RCW 28A.710.040 and 28A.715.020 and applies to charter schools established under chapter 28A.710 RCW and state-tribal education compact schools subject to chapter 28A.715 RCW.

(5) For the purposes of this section, "world language other than English" has the same meaning as in RCW 28A.300.577. [2024 c 202 s 4; 2014 c 102 s 2.]

Findings—Intent—2024 c 202: See note following RCW 28A.300.577.

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 s 1.]