

FINAL BILL REPORT

SB 6424

C 102 L 14
Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Establishing a state seal of biliteracy for high school students.

Sponsors: Senators Roach, McAuliffe, Litzow, Fain, Bailey, Mullet, Hasegawa and Tom.

Senate Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education
House Committee on Education

Background: The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), in consultation with the public four-year institutions of higher education, the State Board of Community and Technical Colleges, and the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board, develops a standard high school transcript that must include a notation of whether the student has earned a certificate of individual achievement or a certificate of academic achievement.

The State Board of Education (SBE) establishes the state minimum high school graduation requirements. The current requirements do not require students to earn course credits in a world language. SBE proposed a 24-credit high school graduation framework that requires two credits of world language, although a student could substitute other course credits if the credits are associated with a student's post-secondary pathway as provided in the student's High School and Beyond Plan.

California and New York passed state legislation authorizing a state-level Seal of Biliteracy to recognize students who are proficient in English and another world language by high school graduation. The award is a notation that appears on the high school graduate's transcript or diploma, or both.

Every school district must make the Transitional Bilingual Instruction Program (TBIP) available to each student whose primary language is not English and whose English language skills are sufficiently deficient to impair learning. The purpose of TBIP is to enable students to achieve competency in English. According to OSPI, 94,176 students in May 2013 were English language learners enrolled in the state-funded TBIP. This represents 9 percent of total student enrollment. Additionally, OSPI reports that students across the state in TBIP spoke more than 200 different languages.

Summary: The Washington State Seal of Biliteracy (Seal) is established to recognize public high school graduates who attain a high level of proficiency in speaking, reading, and writing in one or more world languages in addition to English.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

OSPI must adopt rules establishing criteria for the award of the Seal, including requiring a student to demonstrate proficiency in English by meeting the state high school graduation requirements in English, and proficiency in one or more other world languages. For the purposes of awarding the Seal, world languages include American sign language and Native American languages.

School districts are encouraged to award the Seal to qualifying students, and participating districts must place a notation on the student's diploma and transcript indicating the student has earned the Seal. Technical changes are made to permit the standardized high school transcript to include a notation of whether the student has earned the Seal.

By December 1, 2017, OSPI must report to the Legislature the number of students awarded the Seal in the previous two school years and the languages spoken by those students; and report the number of students enrolled or previously enrolled in the TBIP and the languages spoken by those students. OSPI must also report the methods used by students to demonstrate proficiency for the Seal, and how OSPI plans to increase the number of possible methods for students to demonstrate proficiency, particularly in world languages that are not widely spoken.

Votes on Final Passage:

Senate	48	0	
House	69	27	(House amended)
Senate	49	0	(Senate concurred)

Effective: June 12, 2014