

1 AN ACT concerning education.

2 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,**
3 **represented in the General Assembly:**

4 Section 5. The School Code is amended by changing Section
5 2-3.159 as follows:

6 (105 ILCS 5/2-3.159)

7 Sec. 2-3.159. State Seal of Biliteracy.

8 (a) In this Section, "foreign language" means any language
9 other than English, including all modern languages, Latin,
10 American Sign Language, Native American languages, and native
11 languages.

12 (b) The State Seal of Biliteracy program is established to
13 recognize public high school graduates who have attained a high
14 level of proficiency in one or more languages in addition to
15 English. The State Seal of Biliteracy shall be awarded
16 beginning with the 2014-2015 school year. School district
17 participation in this program is voluntary.

18 (c) The purposes of the State Seal of Biliteracy are as
19 follows:

20 (1) To encourage pupils to study languages.

21 (2) To certify attainment of biliteracy.

22 (3) To provide employers with a method of identifying
23 people with language and biliteracy skills.

1 (4) To provide universities with an additional method
2 to recognize applicants seeking admission.

3 (5) To prepare pupils with 21st century skills.

4 (6) To recognize the value of foreign language and
5 native language instruction in public schools.

6 (7) To strengthen intergroup relationships, affirm the
7 value of diversity, and honor the multiple cultures and
8 languages of a community.

9 (d) The State Seal of Biliteracy certifies attainment of a
10 high level of proficiency, sufficient for meaningful use in
11 college and a career, by a graduating public high school pupil
12 in one or more languages in addition to English.

13 (e) The State Board of Education shall adopt such rules as
14 may be necessary to establish the criteria that pupils must
15 achieve to earn a State Seal of Biliteracy, which may include
16 without limitation attainment of units of credit in English
17 language arts and languages other than English and passage of
18 such assessments of foreign language proficiency as may be
19 approved by the State Board of Education for this purpose.
20 These rules shall ensure that the criteria that pupils must
21 achieve to earn a State Seal of Biliteracy meet the course
22 credit criteria established under subsection (i) of this
23 Section.

24 (e-5) To demonstrate sufficient English language
25 proficiency for eligibility to receive a State Seal of
26 Biliteracy under this Section, the State Board of Education

1 shall allow a pupil to provide his or her school district with
2 evidence of completion of any of the following:

3 (1) An AP (Advanced Placement) English Language and
4 Composition Exam with a score of 4 or 5.

5 (2) An English language arts dual credit course with a
6 final grade point average of 2.0 or higher on a 4.0 scale
7 or its equivalent as determined by the State Board of
8 Education.

9 (3) Transitional coursework in English language arts
10 articulated in partnership with a public community college
11 as an ESSA (Every Student Succeeds Act) College and Career
12 Readiness Indicator with a final grade point average of 2.0
13 or higher on a 4.0 scale or its equivalent as determined by
14 the State Board of Education.

15 (f) The State Board of Education shall do both of the
16 following:

17 (1) Prepare and deliver to participating school
18 districts an appropriate mechanism for designating the
19 State Seal of Biliteracy on the diploma and transcript of
20 the pupil indicating that the pupil has been awarded a
21 State Seal of Biliteracy by the State Board of Education.

22 (2) Provide other information the State Board of
23 Education deems necessary for school districts to
24 successfully participate in the program.

25 (g) A school district that participates in the program
26 under this Section shall do both of the following:

1 (1) Maintain appropriate records in order to identify
2 pupils who have earned a State Seal of Biliteracy.

3 (2) Make the appropriate designation on the diploma and
4 transcript of each pupil who earns a State Seal of
5 Biliteracy.

6 (h) No fee shall be charged to a pupil to receive the
7 designation pursuant to this Section. Notwithstanding this
8 prohibition, costs may be incurred by the pupil in
9 demonstrating proficiency, including without limitation any
10 assessments required under subsection (e) of this Section.

11 (i) For admissions purposes, each public university in this
12 State shall accept the State Seal of Biliteracy as equivalent
13 to 2 years of foreign language coursework taken during high
14 school if a student's high school transcript indicates that he
15 or she will be receiving or has received the State Seal of
16 Biliteracy.

17 (j) Each public community college and public university in
18 this State shall establish criteria to translate a State Seal
19 of Biliteracy into course credit based on foreign language
20 course equivalencies identified by the community college's or
21 university's faculty and staff and, upon request from an
22 enrolled student, the community college or university shall
23 award foreign language course credit to a student who has
24 received a State Seal of Biliteracy. Students enrolled in a
25 public community college or public university who have received
26 a State Seal of Biliteracy must request course credit for their

1 seal within 3 academic years after graduating from high school.
2 (Source: P.A. 98-560, eff. 8-27-13; 98-756, eff. 7-16-14;
3 99-600, eff. 1-1-17.)

4 Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect upon
5 becoming law.