



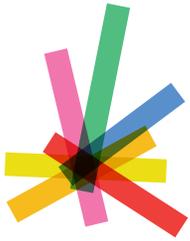
CALIFORNIANS TOGETHER

CHAMPIONING THE SUCCESS
OF ENGLISH LEARNERS



Who are the Recipients of the State Seal of Biliteracy?

JUNE 2019



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ABOUT CALIFORNIANS TOGETHER

Californians Together is a statewide advocacy coalition of powerful organizations from all segments of the education community including teachers, administrators, board members, parents and civil rights non-profit groups. Member organizations come together around the goal of better educating 1.2 million English Learners by improving California's schools and promoting equitable educational policy. Californians Together aims for an educational system that is funded and structured so every child will have full access to a high quality 21st century education and will graduate from our public schools fully bilingual and prepared for success in college and career and full civic participation.

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For more information on implementation of the State Seal of Biliteracy go to the California Department of Education (<https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/el/er/sealofbiliteracy.asp>) and our Seal of Biliteracy website (www.sealofbiliteracy.org) or visit us at

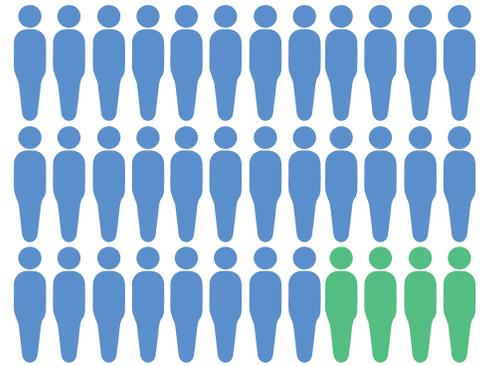
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Who are the Recipients of the State Seal of Biliteracy?

At high school graduation ceremonies across California, families and educators recognized and congratulated students for their years of academic achievements. In California, 418,205 students earned high school diplomas in 2017-18; and 47,248 of those students graduated with a State Seal of Biliteracy, a distinction that recognizes proficiency in English and one or more other languages.

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The State Seal of Biliteracy

In 2008, Californians Together spearheaded a campaign aimed at statewide adoption of a Seal of Biliteracy. Four years later in 2012, the State of California officially adopted its State Seal of Biliteracy. Thus far, 328 school districts have adopted the State Seal of Biliteracy and encourage students to become proficient in two or more languages.



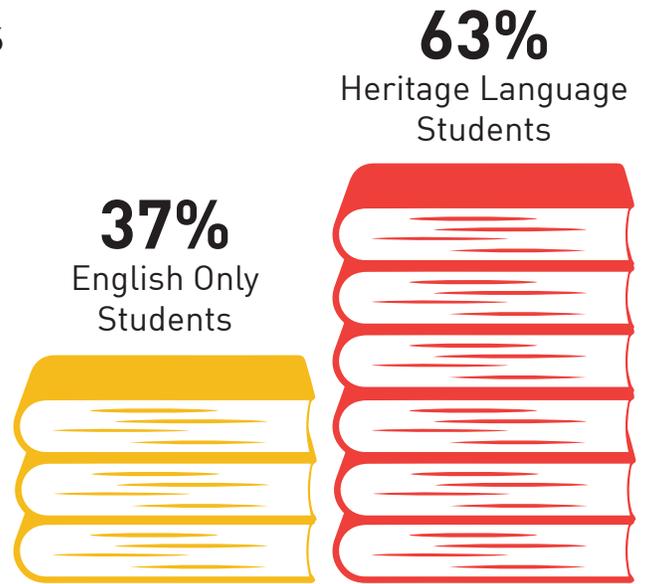
“I come from Guatemala and learning a different language is very hard. So, the Seal of Biliteracy means I knocked down those barriers. That means I have achieved something that I actually never thought of. It is such a privilege to be able to speak both languages.” Tanya Lopez, Azusa Unified 2019 graduate with acceptance to the Torrey Honors institutes at Biola University.

California’s adoption of the State Seal of Biliteracy was a remarkable triumph considering the previous 18 years of English-only instruction. That triumph was made possible by changing public and political attitudes toward multilingual education. The passage of Proposition 58 in 2016, which repealed restrictions on bilingual education, demonstrated the evolution and demand for access to multilingual programs in California. Proposition 58 paved the way for the development and adoption of a new statewide English Learner policy, The English Learner Roadmap. The EL Roadmap adopted in 2017 is a policy that supports and guides districts and schools to offer comprehensive assets-based programs including those leading to biliteracy.

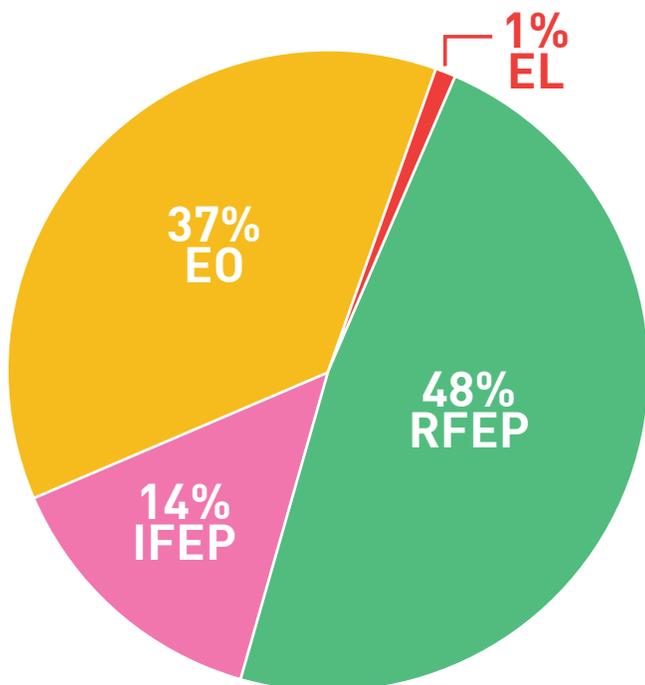
State Seal of Biliteracy Recipients

English Only (EO) and Heritage Language Students (HL)

In 2017-18, 37% of all Seal of Biliteracy recipients spoke only English upon school entry. They were initially English-Only (EO) students who became bilingual. The remaining 63% had a language background other than English at the start of their education. They were Heritage Language (HL) students and became fluent in English and another language.



Heritage Language Students as Seal of Biliteracy Recipients



Of all 2017-18 Heritage Language graduates who received the Seal of Biliteracy, 48% were once English Learners (EL) who were reclassified as Fluent English Proficient (RFEP), 14% were bilingual when entering school known as Initial Fluent English Proficient (IFEP) students, and 1% were English Learners on the cusp of reclassification. Mastering fluency in one of the 41 different languages these students spoke including American Sign Language is a tremendous accomplishment for any student, English Only or Heritage Language. We celebrate all students who achieve proficiency in two or more languages, especially students who walked into their classrooms not knowing one word of English.

Potential Seal of Biliteracy Recipients

There is a need to support and encourage many more students to qualify for the State Seal of Biliteracy. The table below shows the numbers of 2017-18 twelfth grade students in each language proficiency category, the numbers who earned the State Seal of Biliteracy, and their percentage of the 12th grade class.

Proficiency Category	Total Twelfth Grade Enrollment	% of Twelfth Grade Enrollment (1)	Seal of Biliteracy Recipients	Seal of Biliteracy Recipients % of 12th grade Enrollment
RFEP	140,895	28.8%	22,964	4.69%
IFEP	34,735	7.1%	6,557	1.34%
English Learners	49,900	10.2%	508	0.08%
English Only Students	263,200	53.8%	17,317	3.54%
TOTAL	488,730	99.9%	47,248	9.66%

Students who come to schooling in California with a language background other than English have the basis for proficiency in English and their heritage language. The table above shows that there is great potential for large increases in the percentages of HL students to become bilingual and receive Seals—EO students as well. The simple math is that with access to multilingual programs, many more RFEPs, IFEPs, and EOs could become bilingual each year.

(1) Includes 418,205 graduates and 70,525 twelfth graders who did not graduate

Number of School Districts Offering the State Seal of Biliteracy

Out of the 496 school districts in California eligible to offer the Seal of Biliteracy, 328 districts are participating. It is hoped that the remaining 168 districts will adopt the Seal of Biliteracy soon and provide access for all students across the entire State of California.

California is rewriting our state’s language history by supporting all students to reach multi-language proficiency, and Heritage Language learners to maintain and enhance literacy in their native language.



"I am the first generation to receive a high school diploma and go to college. Like most immigrant families, none of my family members are fluent in English. This is why I embrace the value of maintaining proficiency in my home language: to interact with my family member and have a closer connection with my home culture. Because I'm able to communicate with my family, I have learned more about my roots and heritage. Knowing well about my culture, I'm able to raise cultural awareness in my community and able to build self-confidence. I'm proud and embrace my heritage, where I come from, our unique culture, and most importantly my identity."
Thao Vy Le, Magnolia High School 2019 graduate and merit scholarship recipient



Global California 2030 A State Initiative

In May 2018, the California Department of Education launched Global California 2030. The initiative's purpose is to equip students with world language skills that will enable them to more fully engage with and better appreciate the rich and diverse mixture of cultures, heritages, and languages in California. This initiative calls for more than tripling the number of students earning the Seal of Biliteracy, to 150,000 graduates by 2030.

Benefits of Bilingualism

Speaking two or more languages has proven cognitive, social and economic benefits. Bilingual students have the ability to retain and manipulate varying pieces of information, do better academically in English and their home language, have better college going and completion rates, are preferred by employers and for language heritage students maintain strong connections to their family members, language and culture. These students are our future bilingual teachers, doctors, government employees, and artists.



Conclusion and Recommendations

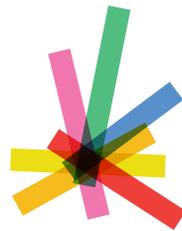
California is moving toward multilingualism for all students. The rapid increase in the number of local educational agencies adopting the Seal of Biliteracy and the number of students qualifying for that designation is heartening. The state adoption of the EL Roadmap and Global California 2030 provides the framework for further work in elevating programs for English only and Heritage Language speakers and supports the vision of a multilingual state with benefits to students and the state as a whole.

Recommendations for a Seal of Biliteracy Campaign:

- ★ Support 100% of California’s school districts to adopt the State Seal of Biliteracy.
- ★ Have up-to-date lists of county offices, districts, and charter schools that have adopted the Seal of Biliteracy.
- ★ Track and report the demographics of students who receive Seals of Biliteracy.
- ★ Expand resources for districts, schools, and classrooms to fully implement the English Learner Roadmap including multilingual programs leading to eligibility for the Seal of Biliteracy.
- ★ Keep the focus on Global California 2030’s goals by widely reporting on the status of goal attainment annually.
- ★ Publishing and distributing informational materials for students in the lower grades to motivate them to develop proficiency in English and another language leading to state recognition with the State Seal of Biliteracy.
- ★ Develop a multilingual communications campaign to reach parents of English learners to learn about the State Seal of Biliteracy and the importance and benefits of enrolling their children in multilingual programs to qualify for this recognition.



“I aspire to become a pediatrician. Being bilingual will allow me to diminish the language barrier that often exists between patients and physicians. I hope to administer the best possible care for patients that do not speak English and better connect with them and their families by being proficient in a language they are comfortable with.” Karina Moreno, Anaheim High School and former K-12 Dual Language Learner program student.



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