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MEMORANDUM

TO: District and Charter School Curriculum Directors and Counselors

FROM: Shawna Jessen, Director, Office of Teaching and Learning
Rachel Tillotson, Education Programs Professional, World Languages and Secondary E.L.A.

DATE: October 1, 2024

SUBJECT: Nevada State Seal of Biliteracy Best Practices Guidance

In accordance with [Assembly Bill 166 of the 78th Legislative Session](#), the Nevada Department of Education established the creation and delivery of the State Seal of Biliteracy, [Nevada Revised Statute 388.591](#).

In May of 2024, two formal work sessions were held with school and district leader representatives across Nevada. The purpose of these work sessions was two-fold. First, was to clarify definitions found to be confusing by schools and districts regarding the Nevada State Seal of Biliteracy language in [NRS 388.593](#). Second, was to align districts and schools across the State in the implementation of testing and the awarding of the Nevada State Seal of Biliteracy. This “Best Practices” document is the result of those work sessions, and the feedback provided by educational leaders in attendance and is meant to provide statewide alignment with guidance for testing and awarding of the Nevada State Seal of Biliteracy.

This document is meant to provide guidance for the minimum requirements for students to earn the Nevada State Seal of Biliteracy. Districts or governing bodies of a charter school have the liberty to implement stricter requirements better suited to the needs of their student populations if so determined.

Best Practice Guidance

A high school graduating senior may earn the Nevada State Seal of Biliteracy by fulfilling the following requirements:

- 1. Successfully complete all English Language Arts courses with a grade point average of 2.0 on a 4.0 (unweighted) scale.**

Best Practices

- This applies to all English courses that fulfill the Nevada English Language Arts high school graduation requirements.

- Districts and governing bodies of charter schools will determine the vetting process and timeline to ensure that students can receive recognition at graduation ceremonies per district and charter school policies.

2. **Demonstrate proficiency in one or more languages other than English by satisfying either 2a. or 2b.**

2(a)

By passing an Advanced Placement (AP) world language exam with a score of 3 or higher

Best Practices:

- The phrase “Advanced Placement world language examination” applies to ALL possible AP world language exams including AP Language and Culture exams AND AP Literature and Culture exams.
- No specific grade level nor age is required when passing an AP world language exam. A student may fulfill this requirement to qualify for the Nevada State Seal of Biliteracy by passing an Advanced Placement world language exam in any grade that it is offered.

OR

By passing an International Baccalaureate (IB) world language exam with a score of 4 or higher

Best Practice:

- No specific grade level nor age is required when passing an IB world language exam. A student may fulfill this requirement to qualify for the Nevada State Seal of Biliteracy by passing an IB world language exam in any grade that it is offered.

OR

2(b)

By passing an examination in a world language, if the examination is approved by the board of trustees of a school district or the governing body of a charter school or university school for profoundly gifted pupils, as applicable.

Best Practices

- Qualifying students must score at the **Intermediate Mid** level in EVERY communication skill available on the approved assessment. Scores are not averaged. Students must prove proficiency in every assessed skill area.
- If a language is not available on the currently approved list of assessments, and a different assessment must be used to fulfill the world language other than English requirement, the examination in a world language other than English,

- Must be comprised of **real-world functions** (global tasks the learner can perform in the language)
- Must measure **all** skills of communication (reading, writing, speaking, listening) if an examination exists that has this ability
- Must include **all skills that are currently available** for assessment **if no examination exists** that can assess all communication skills in a language
- **If no assessment exists for a language**, the approving local authority may submit an **alternative method of assessing** that language to the State of Nevada Department of Education for review and approval. The alternative method of assessment must meet all previously stated requirements, be able to measure student proficiency at an Intermediate Mid level that is equivalent to other approved assessments and include graders that have been trained on how to assess student proficiency at the Intermediate Mid level.
- World language other than English assessments (excluding AP and IB assessments) should not be administered to students prior the commencement of their freshman or 9th grade year of high school.
 - If a student passes one of the approved assessments prior to their 9th grade year of high school, they should retest during high school or pass an AP or IB exam to fulfill the world language other than English component of the Nevada State Seal of Biliteracy requirements.
 - It is strongly recommended that students wait to take this type of exam (other than AP and IB) until their junior (11th grade) or senior (12th grade) year as this will be a measure of proficiency awarded at high school graduation and may be used for college course waivers, college credit, college level placement, and proof of biliteracy for employment. Thus, students should graduate with this award as evidence of their most current level of language proficiency.
 - The selected examination in a world language other than English (other than AP and IB) should be used for the sole purpose of assessing proficiency that qualifies students to earn the Nevada State Seal of Biliteracy in languages where multiple language assessment options exist. If assessing for any other reason, a different exam must be used. In cases where only one testing option per language exists, the district or charter school must establish a way to distinguish the Nevada State Seal of Biliteracy exam results from other exam results i.e. placement exams, credit by exam, end-of-course exams, etc. when recording in the assessment page of Infinite Campus.

3. If the primary language of the pupil is not English, demonstrate proficiency in English on an assessment designated by the Department.

Best Practices:

- This refers to pupils whose primary language is not English and who have not attended all English Language Arts courses due to not being in the country for their entire high school

experience or for pupils who have failed to meet the grade point average of 2.0 on a 4.0 (unweighted) scale due to lack of exposure to the English language.

- If pupils have completed their English Language Arts courses with a grade point average of 2.0 on a 4.0 (unweighted) scale, per [NRS 388.593 Subsection 1](#), there is no need for additional assessment in English.
- All students, regardless of primary language, must complete all English Language Arts high school graduation requirements.

The State of Nevada does not sponsor nor endorse any specific assessment vendor but, for the purpose of providing options and resources to educational agencies offering the Nevada State Seal of Biliteracy, please refer to the document, “State Seal of Biliteracy Assessment Resources” posted on NDE’s [Seal of Biliteracy webpage](#) for currently approved assessments with associated qualifying threshold scores.

cc: Ann Marie Dickson, Deputy Superintendent, Student Achievement Division