Heritage Languages in Maryland

Nearly 17% of Maryland’s students speak a language other than English at home. Some of these students take weekend classes in their heritage language for many years. These students will also be eligible to be recognized for their language proficiency with a Seal of Biliteracy in their heritage language. They must meet the same eligibility requirements listed in this brochure.

Registration

Registration for the assessment is not covered by the school or school system.

Students are responsible for the assessment fees.

Students may practice for the test by accessing this website:

https://avantassessment.com/stamp

There is no cost to the student to work on the practice test.

For more information, contact your school guidance office:

Wicomico High School:
abonstee@wcboe.org

Parkside High School:
sharkins@wcboe.org

JMB High School:
kgarbi@wcboe.org

Mardela Middle & High School:
pluckett@wcboe.org

District Coordinator
Ellen Harlan:
eharlan@wcboe.org
410-677-4400
**What is a Seal of Biliteracy?**

A Seal of Biliteracy is a state award that recognizes a student’s high level of proficiency in listening, speaking, reading and writing in one or more languages other than English. It is awarded to eligible high school students by participating public school systems in Maryland.

Begun in California in 2011, the Seal of Biliteracy is now offered in 33 states and the District of Columbia. Maryland’s Seal of Biliteracy was signed into law in 2016.

**Why is Maryland Awarding a Seal of Biliteracy?**

High school graduates who can function in two or more languages are equipped with the knowledge and skills to participate successfully in college, careers, and a diverse 21st century society.

The purpose of the Seal of Biliteracy is to:

- Recognize the value of language learning in public schools.
- Encourage students to attain high proficiency levels in one or more languages in addition to English.
- Affirm native or heritage languages.
- Provide employers with a method of identifying individuals with language and biliteracy skills.
- Prepare students with the critical skills necessary to function in a global society.
- Strengthen cross-cultural communication, affirm the value of diversity and honor the multiple cultures and languages in our communities.

**Eligibility**

To be eligible for a Seal of Biliteracy, a student must fulfill the following requirements:

- Pass the Maryland High School Assessment in English, scoring 725 or higher.
- Score Intermediate High Proficiency or equivalent on an approved world language assessment.

Below is a link to the assessment selected by our county:

For a complete list of approved Assessments, please visit: http://marylandpublicschools.org/