

1 A bill to be entitled
 2 An act relating to the Florida Seal of Biliteracy
 3 Program; creating s. 1003.432, F.S.; defining terms;
 4 establishing the program to recognize a high school
 5 graduate who has attained a high level of competency
 6 in one or more foreign languages; providing the
 7 purpose of the program; specifying criteria to earn a
 8 Gold Seal of Biliteracy or a Silver Seal of
 9 Biliteracy; requiring the Commissioner of Education
 10 and school districts to perform specified duties to
 11 administer the program; prohibiting a school district
 12 or the Department of Education from charging a fee for
 13 the seals; requiring the State Board of Education to
 14 adopt rules; providing an effective date.

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 16 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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 18 Section 1. Section 1003.432, Florida Statutes, is created
 19 to read:

20 1003.432 Florida Seal of Biliteracy Program for high
 21 school graduates.—

22 (1) As used in this section, the term:

23 (a) "Biliteracy" means attainment of a high level of
 24 competency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing in one
 25 or more foreign languages in addition to English, which is
 26 signified on a high school graduate's diploma and transcript as

27 either a Gold Seal of Biliteracy or a Silver Seal of Biliteracy.

28 (b) "Foreign language" means a language other than English
 29 and includes American Sign Language, classical languages, and
 30 indigenous languages.

31 (c) "Gold" means the highest level of competency certified
 32 by the Florida Seal of Biliteracy Program.

33 (d) "Silver" means the second-highest level of competency
 34 certified by the Florida Seal of Biliteracy Program.

35 (2) The Florida Seal of Biliteracy Program is established
 36 to recognize a high school graduate who has attained a high
 37 level of competency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing
 38 in one or more foreign languages in addition to English. The
 39 Commissioner of Education shall award the Seal of Biliteracy
 40 upon graduation to a high school student who meets the
 41 qualifications in this section. The seal must differentiate
 42 between two levels of competency, designated as Gold and Silver,
 43 which must be at least as rigorous as is recommended in the
 44 biliteracy seal guidelines established by national organizations
 45 supporting foreign languages instruction.

46 (3) The purpose of the Florida Seal of Biliteracy Program
 47 is to:

48 (a) Encourage students to study foreign languages.

49 (b) Certify attainment of biliteracy.

50 (c) Provide employers with a method of identifying an
 51 individual with biliteracy skills who is seeking employment.

52 (d) Provide a postsecondary institution with a method of

53 recognizing an applicant with biliteracy skills who is seeking
 54 admission to the postsecondary institution.

55 (e) Recognize and promote foreign language instruction in
 56 public schools.

57 (f) Affirm the value of diversity, honor multiple cultures
 58 and foreign languages, and strengthen the relationships between
 59 multiple cultures in a community.

60 (4) The Gold Seal of Biliteracy or the Silver Seal of
 61 Biliteracy must be awarded to a high school student who has
 62 earned a standard high school diploma and who:

63 (a) Has earned four foreign language course credits in the
 64 same foreign language with a cumulative 3.0 grade point average
 65 or higher on a 4.0 scale;

66 (b) Has achieved a qualifying score on a foreign language
 67 assessment; or

68 (c) Has satisfied alternative requirements as determined
 69 by the State Board of Education pursuant to subsection (8).

70 (5) The Commissioner of Education shall:

71 (a) Prepare and provide to each school district an
 72 appropriate insignia to be affixed to the student's diploma
 73 indicating that the student has been awarded the Gold Seal of
 74 Biliteracy or the Silver Seal of Biliteracy.

75 (b) Provide information necessary for a school district to
 76 successfully implement the program.

77 (6) Each school district shall:

78 (a) Maintain appropriate records to identify a student who

79 has met the requirements to receive the Gold Seal of Biliteracy
80 or the Silver Seal of Biliteracy.

81 (b) Provide the Commissioner of Education with the number
82 of students who have met the requirements to receive the Gold
83 Seal of Biliteracy or the Silver Seal of Biliteracy.

84 (c) Affix the appropriate insignia to the student's
85 diploma and indicate on the student's transcript that the
86 student has earned the Gold Seal of Biliteracy or the Silver
87 Seal of Biliteracy.

88 (7) A school district or the Department of Education may
89 not charge a fee for the Gold Seal of Biliteracy or the Silver
90 Seal of Biliteracy.

91 (8) The State Board of Education shall adopt rules to
92 implement this section. Such rules, at a minimum, must include:

93 (a) A process to confirm a student's successful completion
94 of the requirements in subsection (4).

95 (b) The assessments and corresponding passing scores
96 required to earn the Gold Seal of Biliteracy or the Silver Seal
97 of Biliteracy, which may not be lower than the passing scores on
98 at least one of the following:

99 1. An International Baccalaureate examination in the
100 foreign language;

101 2. An Advanced Placement examination in the foreign
102 language;

103 3. An SAT Subject Test examination in the foreign
104 language; or

105 4. An Advanced International Certificate of Education
106 examination in the foreign language.

107 (c) Alternative requirements a student may satisfy to
108 demonstrate equivalent competency in a foreign language,
109 including requirements a student whose native language is not
110 English may satisfy to demonstrate competency in his or her
111 native language to earn the Gold Seal of Biliteracy or the
112 Silver Seal of Biliteracy.

113 (d) A process to award foreign language course credits to
114 a student who was not enrolled in a foreign language course or
115 who did not complete the course but has demonstrated competency
116 in a foreign language as provided in this subsection.

117 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2016.