### Criteria for Students to Earn the State Seal of Biliteracy

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The criteria for earning the State Seal of Biliteracy can be found in [603 CMR 31.07(2)](http://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr31.html?section=07) of the state regulations. The Board of Elementary and Secondary Education established these criteria to identify and recognize students who have attained a high level of proficiency in English and not less than one world language. To qualify for the State Seal of Biliteracy, students must meet all graduation requirements and the English language and world language criteria described below:

**English Language Criteria**

Students who satisfy the English Language Arts requirement of the Competency Determination described in [603 CMR 30.03(2)(a) or (3)(a)](http://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr30.html?section=03) satisfy the English criteria for the State Seal of Biliteracy. For students who have taken the English Language Arts grade 10 MCAS prior to the spring of 2019 (the Legacy MCAS), that means meeting or exceeding the Proficient threshold scaled score of 240.[[1]](#footnote-1) For students taking the MCAS in the spring of 2019 and beyond (the Next-Gen MCAS), the minimum requirement is *Meeting Expectations* (472-500). The Department also offers MCAS retests in November and March that [eligible students](http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/testadmin/retest/pam.pdf#page=19) can take to obtain a score of 240 (Legacy MCAS) or 472 (Next-Gen MCAS) to satisfy the English criteria for the State Seal of Biliteracy.

Students who earn a scaled score between 220 and 238 on the English Language Arts grade 10 Legacy MCAS or between 455 and 471 on the Next-Gen MCAS may satisfy the English language criteria for the State Seal of Biliteracy if they fulfill the requirements of an [Educational Proficiency Plan](http://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr30.html?section=03)[[2]](#footnote-2) and attain a minimum score or level on a nationally recognized and readily available English proficiency assessment approved by the Department. *See* [603 CMR 31.07(2)(a)3](http://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr31.html?section=07). Students who retake the grade 10 English Language Arts MCAS in the spring of their 11 or 12 grade year and score a 240 (Legacy MCAS) or 472 (Next-Gen MCAS) satisfy the English language criteria for the State Seal of Biliteracy. Similarly, ACCESS for ELLs is administered to English learners in January and may be used to satisfy the English language criteria for the State Seal of Biliteracy by students who also fulfill the requirements of an Educational Proficiency Plan. These students must demonstrate English proficiency on ACCESS for ELLs with an overall score of at least level 4.2 and a composite literacy score of at least level 3.9. Districts interested in using an English proficiency assessment other than MCAS and ACCESS for ELLs to satisfy the English language criteria for students on an Educational Proficiency Plan should contact the [Office of Language Acquisition](mailto:el@doe.mass.edu) to request approval.

# **World Language Criteria**

Students who attain a score or level at the **Intermediate-High** level of the [ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines](https://www.actfl.org/publications/guidelines-and-manuals/actfl-proficiency-guidelines-2012ACTFL%20)of 2012, published by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, on a language assessment approved by the Department satisfy the world language criteria for the State Seal of Biliteracy. A student may also be able to demonstrate a high level of proficiency in a world language under certain circumstances as described in the *Portfolio-Based Alternative Evidence Method for Foreign Language Assessments* section of this Guidance below.

**Criteria for the State Seal of Biliteracy with Distinction**

Students who demonstrate mastery of English and a world language may be eligible for the State Seal of Biliteracy with Distinction. To earn the State Seal of Biliteracy with Distinction, students must meet the following criteria:

* English: meeting or exceeding the Advanced threshold scaled score of 260 on the English Language Arts grade 10 Legacy MCAS test (Next-Gen MCAS – 501-560); and
* World Language: scoring at the Advanced-Low level of the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines of 2012 on an assessment approved by the Department or demonstrating an Advanced-Low level of proficiency through a portfolio-based alternative evidence method described below.

1. For more information about the competency determination for students taking the grade 10 ELA MCAS in spring 2019, please see the [February 16, 2018 Memorandum to the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education](http://www.doe.mass.edu/bese/docs/fy2018/2018-02/item6.html). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. For more information on the Educational Proficiency Plan, please see the [*Requirements for the Educational Proficiency Plan (EPP) - Questions and Answers*](http://www.doe.mass.edu/ccr/epp/qa.html)*.* [↑](#footnote-ref-2)