

STATE OF NEW YORK

10292

IN ASSEMBLY

May 18, 2012

Introduced by M. of A. ARROYO -- read once and referred to the Committee on Education

AN ACT to amend the education law, in relation to a state seal of biliteracy

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

1 Section 1. Legislative intent. (a) It is the intent of the legislature
2 to encourage excellence for all pupils, and the legislature wishes to
3 publicly recognize pupils for exemplary achievements in academic
4 studies.

5 (b) The study of languages other than English in elementary and
6 secondary schools should be encouraged because it contributes to a
7 pupil's cognitive development and to our national economy and security.

8 (c) Proficiency in multiple languages is critical in enabling New York
9 to participate effectively in a global political, social, and economic
10 context, and in expanding trade with other countries.

11 (d) The demand for employees to be fluent in more than one language is
12 increasing both in New York and throughout the world.

13 (e) The benefits to employers in having staff fluent in more than one
14 language are clear: access to an expanded market, allowing business
15 owners to better serve their customers' needs, and the sparking of new
16 marketing ideas that better target a particular audience and open a
17 channel of communication with customers.

18 (f) It is the intent of the legislature to promote linguistic profi-
19 ciency and cultural literacy in one or more languages in addition to
20 English and to provide recognition of the attainment of those needed and
21 important skills through the establishment of the state seal of biliter-
22 acy. A state seal of biliteracy would be affixed on the high school
23 diplomas and transcripts of graduating pupils attaining proficiency in
24 one or more languages in addition to English.

25 § 2. The education law is amended by adding a new section 815 to read
26 as follows:

27 § 815. State seal of biliteracy. 1. (a) The state seal of biliteracy
28 is established to recognize high school graduates who have attained a

EXPLANATION--Matter in *italics* (underscored) is new; matter in brackets [] is old law to be omitted.

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1 high level of proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing
2 in one or more languages in addition to English. The state seal of bili-
3 teracy shall be awarded by the commissioner. School district partic-
4 ipation in this program is voluntary.

5 (b) The purposes of the state seal of biliteracy are as follows:

6 (1) To encourage pupils to study languages.

7 (2) To certify attainment of biliteracy.

8 (3) To provide employers with a method of identifying people with
9 language and biliteracy skills.

10 (4) To provide universities with an additional method to recognize
11 applicants seeking admission.

12 (5) To prepare pupils with twenty-first century skills.

13 (6) To recognize the value of foreign language and native language
14 instruction in public schools. For the purpose of this section foreign
15 language means any language other than English (LOTE) including all
16 modern languages, Latin, American Sign Language, Native American
17 languages and native languages.

18 (7) To strengthen intergroup relationships, affirm the value of diver-
19 sity, and honor the multiple cultures and languages of a community.

20 2. (a) The state seal of biliteracy certifies attainment of a high
21 level of proficiency by a graduating high school pupil in one or more
22 languages, in addition to English, and certifies that the graduate meets
23 all of the following criteria:

24 (1) Passing the New York state regents examination or its equivalent
25 in English language arts administered in grade eleven or above.

26 (2) Completion of all English language arts requirements or its equiv-
27 alent for graduation.

28 (3) Proficiency in one or more languages other than English, demon-
29 strated through one of the following methods:

30 (A) Passing a foreign language advanced placement examination in a
31 language other than English (LOTE) or an international baccalaureate
32 examination.

33 (B) Successful completion of at least four units of study in a
34 language other than English (LOTE).

35 (C) Passing a third party and district, regional or BOCES developed
36 assessment for growth and locally selected assessment, if no advanced
37 placement or other such comparable test exists. The school district must
38 certify to the commissioner that such an assessment, at a minimum, meets
39 the rigor of a three year sequence of high school course of study in
40 that language other than English and that passing, at a minimum,
41 assesses listening, speaking, reading and writing in a language other
42 than English. Said test shall be approved by the commissioner.

43 (D) Passing the advanced placement examination in languages other than
44 English with a score of four or higher or passing the SAT II: Subject
45 Tests in languages other than English with a score of six hundred or
46 higher.

47 (b) For languages in which an advanced placement test is not avail-
48 able, the commissioner may provide a listing of equivalent summative
49 assessments that school districts may use in place of an advanced place-
50 ment assessment for purposes of clause (A) of subparagraph three of
51 paragraph (a) of this subdivision. A school district may provide the
52 commissioner with a list of equivalent summative assessments that the
53 district uses in place of an advanced placement test for purposes of
54 clause (A) of subparagraph three of paragraph (a) of this subdivision.
55 The commissioner may use lists received from school districts in devel-
56 oping his or her list of equivalent summative assessments.

1 (c) For purposes of this section, foreign language means any language
2 other than English (LOTE) including all modern languages, Latin, Ameri-
3 can Sign Language, Native American languages and native languages.

4 3. The commissioner shall do both of the following:

5 (a) Prepare and deliver to participating school districts an appropri-
6 ate insignia to be affixed to the diploma and transcript of the pupil
7 indicating that the pupil has been awarded a state seal of biliteracy by
8 the commissioner.

9 (b) Provide other information he or she deems necessary for school
10 districts to successfully participate in the program.

11 4. A school district that participates in the program under this
12 section shall do both of the following:

13 (a) Maintain appropriate records in order to identify pupils who have
14 earned a state seal of biliteracy.

15 (b) Affix the appropriate insignia to the diploma and transcript of
16 each pupil who earns a state seal of biliteracy.

17 5. No fee shall be charged to a pupil pursuant to this section.

18 § 3. This act shall take effect on the first of September next
19 succeeding the date on which it shall have become a law.

NEW YORK STATE ASSEMBLY
MEMORANDUM IN SUPPORT OF LEGISLATION
Submitted in accordance with Assembly Rule III, Section 1f

BILL NUMBER:

SPONSOR: Arroyo

TITLE OF BILL: Establishes the State Seal of Biliteracy to be affixed to the diplomas and transcripts of high school students who have achieved a high level of proficiency in a language, or languages, other than English.

SUMMARY OF PROVISIONS: Establishes the criteria for the awarding of the State Seal of Biliteracy.

JUSTIFICATION: One of the fundamental purposes of education is to encourage students to reach their full potential. The goal of achieving the criteria for a State Seal of Biliteracy focuses on the acquisition of a language, or languages, other than English. This will increase a student's opportunities for further education and future employment

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY: This is new legislation.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS: none to the state

EFFECTIVE DATE: This bill shall take effect on the first of September next succeeding the date on which it shall have become law.