

# California State Seal of Biliteracy Program



**California Department of Education**  
English Learner Support Division  
Language Policy and Leadership Office

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## Purpose of the State Seal of Biliteracy

The State Seal of Biliteracy (SSB) was established to recognize high school graduates who have attained a high level of proficiency in speaking, reading, and writing in one or more languages in addition to English.

The purposes of the SSB are to encourage pupils to study languages, to certify attainment of biliteracy, to provide employers with a method of identifying people with language and biliteracy skills, to provide universities with a method to recognize and give academic credit to applicants seeking admission, to prepare pupils with 21st century skills, to recognize and promote foreign language instruction in public schools, and to strengthen intergroup relationships, affirm the value of diversity, and honor the multiple cultures and languages of a community (*California Education Code [EC] Section 51460.*)

## State Seal of Biliteracy Requirements

A student who graduates from high school must have achieved a high level of literacy and fluency in one or more language(s) in addition to English to be awarded the SSB.

The student must demonstrate:

- 1) **Completion of all English language arts requirements for graduation with an overall grade point average GPA of 2.0 in those classes.**
- 2) **Passage of the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) for English language arts**, or any successor test, administered in grade eleven, **at or above the “standard met” achievement level**, or at the achievement level determined by the Superintendent for any successor test.
- 3) **Proficiency in one or more languages**, other than English, demonstrated through **one** of the following methods:
  - A. Passage of a world language **Advanced Placement (AP) examination** with a score of 3 or higher, or an **International Baccalaureate (IB) examination** with a score of 4 or more.
  - B. Successful completion of a **four-year high school course of study in a world language**, attaining an overall GPA of 3.0 or higher in that course of study, and demonstration of **oral proficiency** in the language comparable to that required to pass an AP or IB examination.

- C. Passage of a **district test** with a score of proficient or higher (**if no AP examination or off the shelf language tests exists** and the school district can certify that the test meets the level of an AP exam), demonstrating proficiency in all of the modes of communication (reading, writing, and speaking) that characterize communication in the language.
- D. Passage of the **SAT II** world language examination with a score of 600 or higher.

In addition to the requirements mentioned above, **if the primary language of a pupil is other than English, he or she shall demonstrate English proficiency on the English Language Proficiency Assessments for California (ELPAC)**, or any previous or successor state English language proficiency assessment, in transitional kindergarten, kindergarten, or any of grades one to twelve, inclusive (*EC* Section 51461).

### Statistics

During the 2017–18 school year, the California Department of Education (CDE) awarded 55,212 SSBs.

For additional SSB statistics, please visit the CDE SSB web page at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/el/er/sealofbiliteracy.asp>.

### Growth by Year

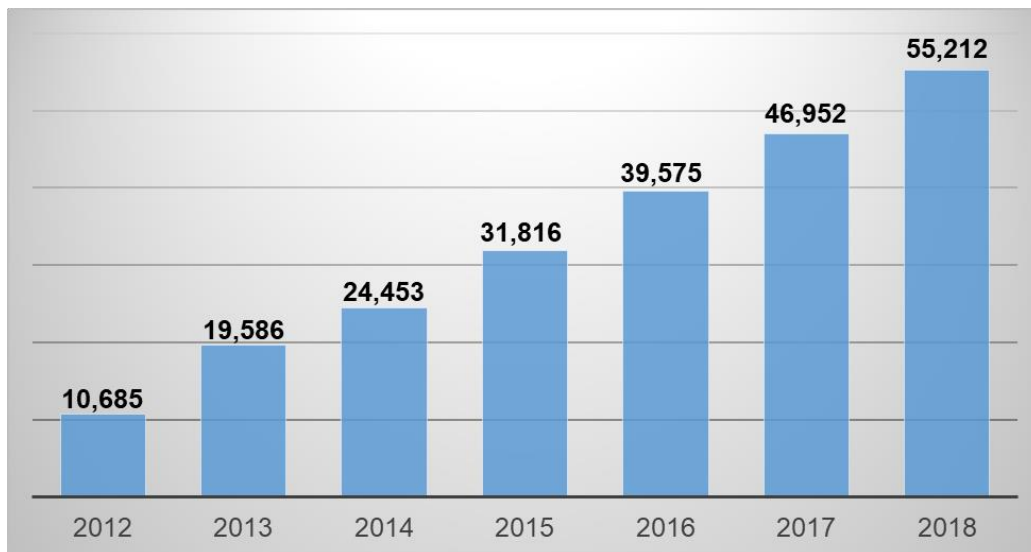


Table 1

Table 1 shows the growth in the number of SSBs awarded since the program was established in 2012.

In 2012, 10,685 SSBs were earned; in 2013, 19,586 SSBs were earned; in 2014, 24,453 SSBs were earned; in 2015, 31,816 SSBs were earned; in 2016, 39,575 SSBs were earned; in 2017, 46,952 SSBs were earned; and in 2018, 55,212 SSBs were earned.

Since 2012, a total of 228,279 SSBs have been awarded.

## Top Languages

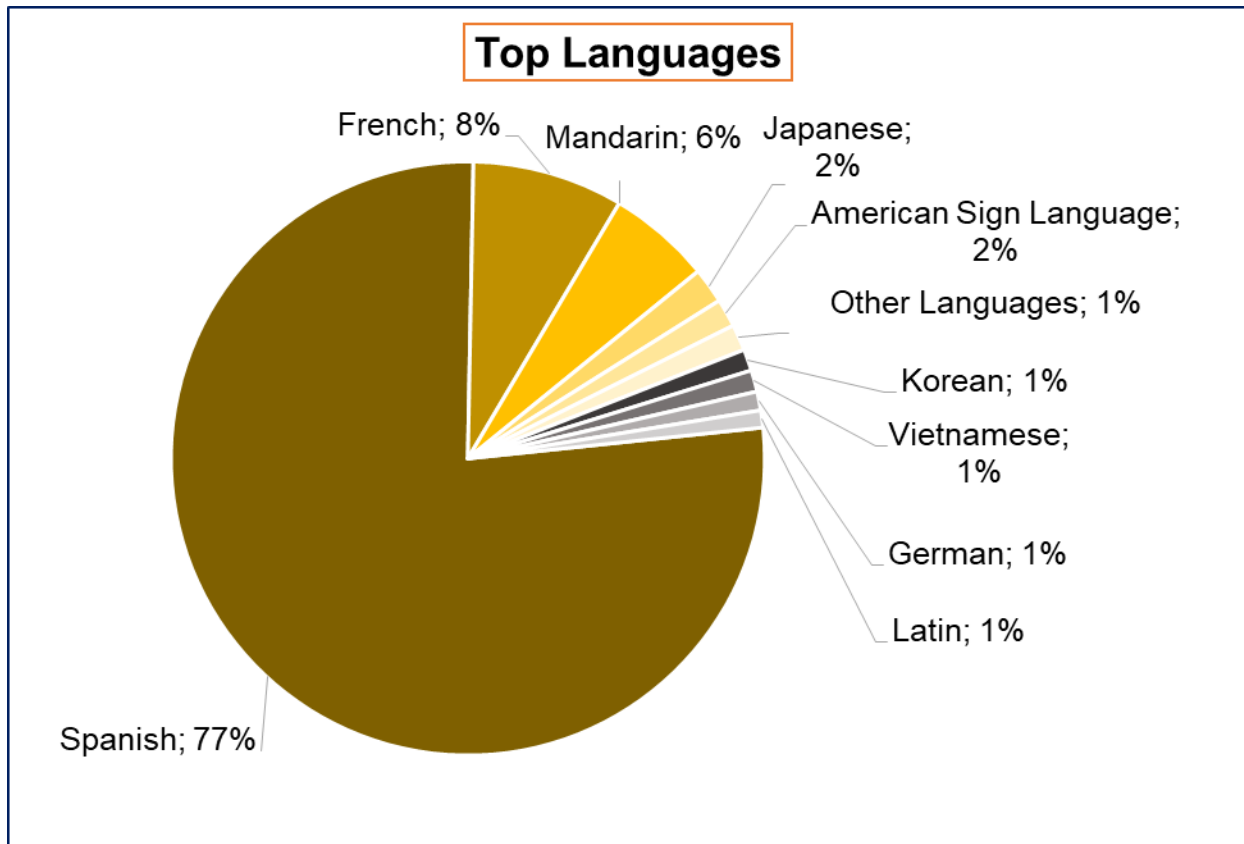


Table 2

Table 2 shows the percentage of seals earned for each of the top requested languages in the 2017–18 school year.

The percentage of seals awarded in each language are: 77% in Spanish, 8% in French, 6% in Mandarin, 2% in Japanese, 2% in American Sign Language, 1% in Korean, 1% in Vietnamese, 1% in German, 1% in Latin, and 1% in other languages.

The languages included in the “other languages” category are: Amharic, Arabic, Armenian, Bengali, Bosnian, Cantonese, Czech, Dari, Dutch, Farsi, Filipino (Tagalog), Gujarati, Haitian (Creole), Hebrew, Hindi, Hmong, Igbo, Indonesian, Italian, Khmer, Mixteco, Mongolian, Portuguese, Punjabi, Russian, Tamil, Telugu, Thai, Tongan, Turkish, Ukrainian, and Urdu.

## Participating Counties

The counties that participated in the SSB program in the 2017–18 school year are Alameda, Amador, Butte, Calaveras, Colusa, Contra Costa, Del Norte, El Dorado, Fresno, Glenn, Humboldt, Imperial, Kern, Kings, Lake, Lassen, Los Angeles, Madera, Marin, Mendocino, Merced, Modoc, Mono, Monterey, Napa, Nevada, Orange, Placer, Plumas, Riverside, Sacramento, San Benito, San Bernardino, San Diego, San Francisco, San Joaquin, San Luis Obispo, San Mateo, Santa Barbara, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Shasta, Solano, Sonoma, Stanislaus, Sutter, Tehama, Tulare, Tuolumne, Ventura, Yolo, Yuba.



## Top Ten Counties with Local Educational Agencies Requesting Seals

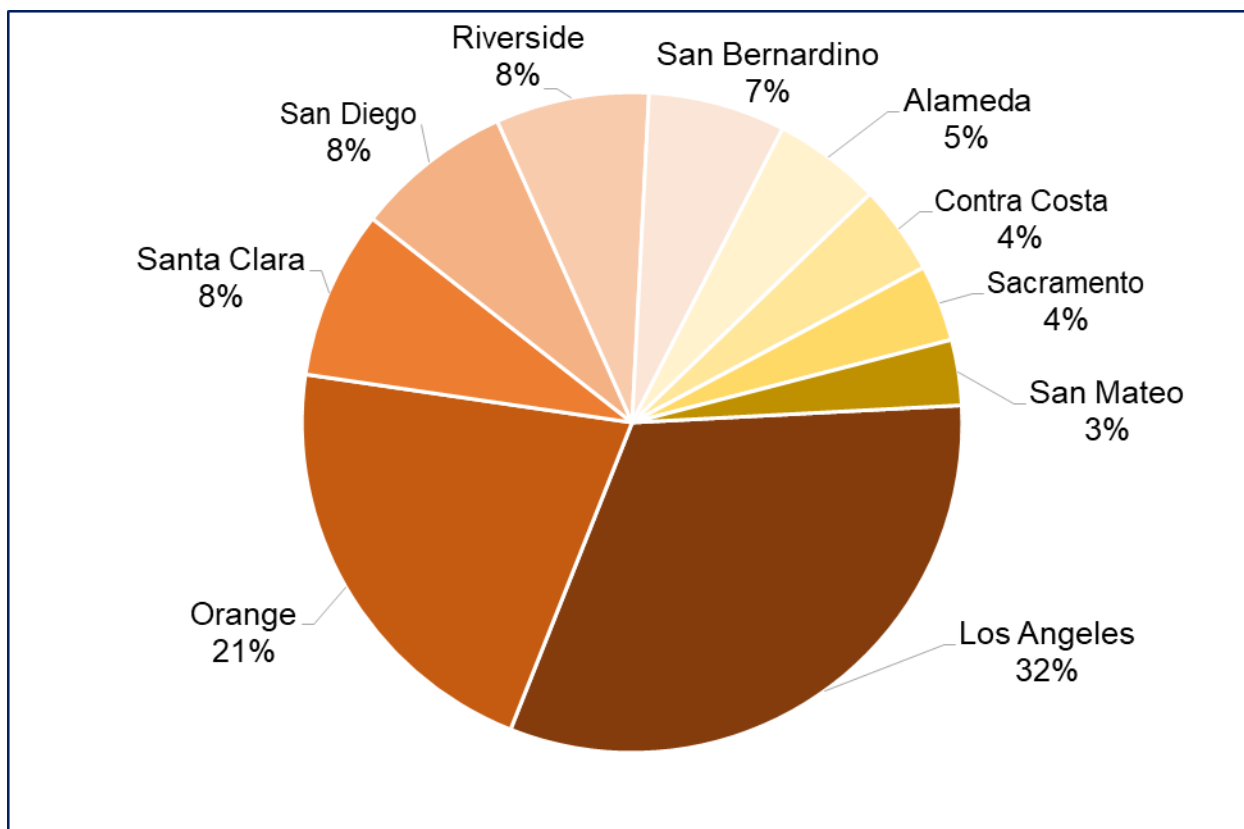


Table 3

Table 3 shows the top ten counties with local educational agencies (LEAs) requesting SSBs in the 2017–18 school year.

The top ten counties with LEAs requesting SSBs and the percentage of the total number of SSBs awarded in that county are: 32% in Los Angeles, 21% in Orange, 8% in Santa Clara, 8% in San Diego, 8% in Riverside, 7% in San Bernardino, 5% in Alameda, 4% in Contra Costa, 4% in Sacramento, and 3% in San Mateo.

### Insignia Request Process

#### Who can order insignias?

Public schools, direct-funded charter schools, school districts, and county offices of education are eligible to order SSB insignias.

#### What is the process for requesting insignias?

LEAs may request insignias from the CDE by completing the online Insignia Request Form, available on the CDE SSB web page at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/437537>.

#### What is the deadline to submit the Insignia Request Form?

It is recommended that LEAs submit the online Insignia Request Form at least four weeks prior to the graduation date. This will allow sufficient time to mail insignias to the LEA and for the insignias to be affixed to the diplomas at the local level.

### **Is there a cost associated with the State Seal of Biliteracy?**

Per *EC* Section 51464, no fee may be charged to LEAs or students who participate in the SSB program.

## **CDE Resources**

### **CDE SSB Web Page**

The CDE SSB web page at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/437537>, includes information and resources for educators, parents, and students regarding the SSB program. This web page includes a link to the online Insignia Request Form.

## **Other Resources**

### **Californians Together Seal of Biliteracy Website**

The Californians Together Seal of Biliteracy website at <https://sealofbiliteracy.org>, contains information and resources on pathway awards as well as national statistics and information.

## **Contact Us**

Please direct questions about the SSB to the Language Policy and Leadership Office.

Phone: 916-319-0845

Email: [SEAL@cde.ca.gov](mailto:SEAL@cde.ca.gov)

## **California Department of Education**

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