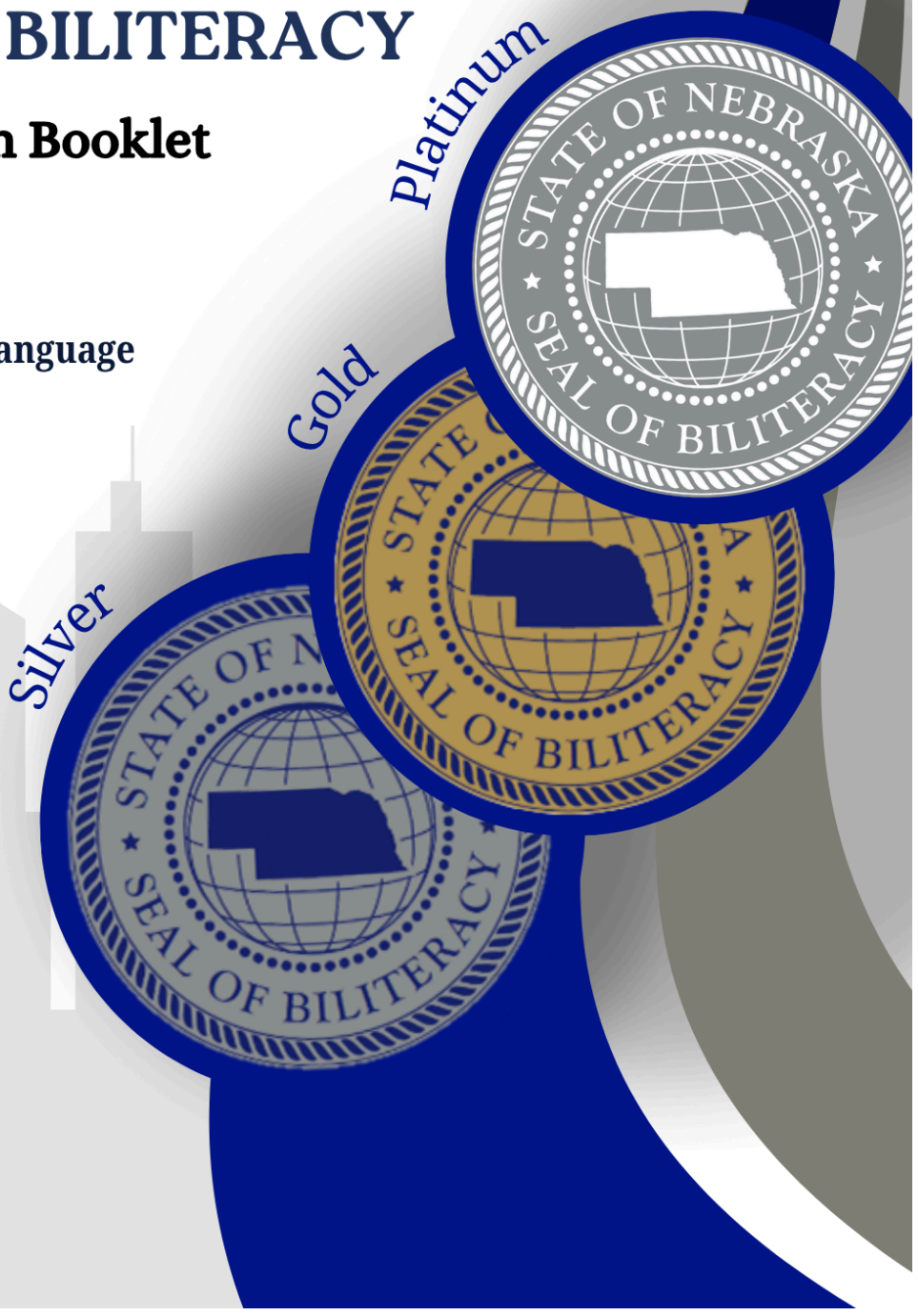
# NEBRASKA
## SEAL OF BILITERACY

### Information Booklet

Presented by
**NDE World Language Education**




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# Nebraska Seal of Biliteracy Information Booklet

The Nebraska Seal of Biliteracy, established in 2020 with support from the Nebraska Languages Association (Nebla) recognizes high school students who have achieved proficiency in English and at least one additional language upon graduation. Since its inception, over 1,200 students have been honored with this distinction, highlighting their linguistic and cultural competencies.

### About the Nebraska Seal of Biliteracy

The Seal is awarded at three levels:

- **Silver Level**: For students demonstrating Intermediate-Mid proficiency, indicating the ability to handle familiar topics and everyday communication.
- **Gold Level**: For those achieving Intermediate-High proficiency, showcasing stronger language control and the capacity to engage in more complex conversations.
- **Platinum Level**: Introduced in August 2025, this highest distinction will be awarded to students attaining Advanced-Low proficiency or higher, reflecting effective communication across a wide range of topics, including in academic and professional contexts.

The impact of the Nebraska Seal of Biliteracy continues to expand, aligning with nationwide efforts to recognize multilingual proficiency. Five Nebraska institutions of higher education have committed to awarding academic credit to Seal recipients, providing students with tangible benefits in their postsecondary pursuits. Additionally, six businesses and twelve organizations across the country have pledged to acknowledge the Seal in their hiring and community engagement practices, reinforcing the value of language skills in today's diverse workforce.

By joining the national network of states offering the Seal of Biliteracy, Nebraska continues to promote language learning, cultural appreciation, and real-world opportunities for students, ensuring they are well-prepared for success in college, careers, and global engagement.

## State Accountability and Strategic Alignment

Beginning in 2025, the Nebraska Seal of Biliteracy was added as one of the Post-Secondary Readiness indicators within Nebraska's state accountability framework, AQuESTT (Accountability for a Quality Education System, Today and Tomorrow).

For detailed information, please access the following resources:

- 2026 AQuESTT Classification Business Rules
- 2026 AQuESTT Classification Indicator Explanations

- Understanding the Postsecondary Readiness Indicator

The Nebraska Seal of Biliteracy is also included in the Nebraska Department of Education Strategic Plan for 2026-2030. The inclusion of the Seal of Biliteracy within Nebraska's accountability and strategic planning frameworks underscores the importance of maintaining rigorous, proficiency-based assessment standards for all approved measures.

## Qualifications

To be awarded the Nebraska Seal of Biliteracy, applicants must demonstrate language proficiency in both English and another language. For English, applicants are required to provide evidence of proficiency at the Intermediate Mid-Level on the ACTFL proficiency scale.

As for the other languages, there are three levels of recognition:

- Silver Level – Intermediate Mid
- Gold Level – Intermediate High
- Platinum Level – Advanced Low

The following section will describe the eligibility requirements for English proficiency and other language proficiency in detail.

## English Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible for the Seal of Biliteracy, students must demonstrate their proficiency in the English Language. To determine a student's level of English proficiency, any of the following evidence is acceptable:

- Six COMPLETED semesters of ELA coursework (including AP English courses) with a grade of C or above (College Board scale: 73%). Classes in progress do not count toward eligibility.
- ACT: Composite ELA 18
- AP English Language & Composition Test: 3
- SAT Reading & Writing score: 480
- ELPA 21 - Combination of Scores of 4 - High School
- STAMP 4 S English Proficiency: 5
- AAPPL- I3

**EL students**

EL students should submit ELPA 21 results they received in high school. If EL students exited the program before high school, they should not use ELPA 21 results as evidence for the Nebraska Seal of Biliteracy application. EL courses are not accepted as proficiency evidence for English.

**International Schools English Credits**

Courses that are in an International School, American, or British Schools may be used toward eligibility, while English as a World Language may not.

## Other Language Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible for the Seal of Biliteracy, students must demonstrate proficiency in a second language through one of the following options:

Transcript evidence (Heritage/Native Spanish Speakers): students with the following courses explicitly stated on their high school transcripts may qualify for a Seal with:

- a combination of six semesters of Honors Spanish, Spanish for Spanish Speakers, AP/IB Spanish classes with a grade of C or above (Silver)
- the above classes + dual language/immersion courses with a grade of C or above (Gold)
- four semesters of Spanish for Spanish Speakers with a C and above, with Dual Language courses (Silver)

Students with six English Language Arts (ELA)-equivalent classes taught in a language other than English in a non-English-speaking country to qualify for a Silver Seal. To qualify for Gold Seal, they must take these AND six other content-based classes taught in that language. These might include social studies, science, math, or other subjects. This eligibility route requires verification of instructional language, such as a transcript from the country.

| | Silver Proficiency | Gold Proficiency | Platinum Proficiency (Aug, 2025) |
|---|---|---|---|
| **STAMP 4S Test** | Score of 5 in each section | Score of 6 in each section | Score of 7 in each section |
| **AAPPL Test** | I-3 in each section | I-5 in each section | A-1 in each section |
| **AP Language & Culture Test** | Score of 3 | Score of 4 | Score of 5 |
| **ALTA Test** | ILR 1 (or 5 in ALTA scale) | ILR 1+/2 (or 6 in ALTA scale) | ILR 2+ (or a 7 in the ALTA scale) |
| **International Baccalaureate** | Score of 4 | Score of 5 | Score of 6+ |
| **Cambridge International AS Exam** | Score of D | Score of B | Score of A |

**Proficiency test results:** The image on the right shows examples of nationally recognized proficiency tests, which assess a variety of languages and their respective scores indicating seal eligibility. Please contact Dr. Chrystal Liu, chrystal.liu@nebraska.gov for questions about additional proficiency.

## Application Process

The Nebraska Seal of Biliteracy application opens three times per year, with submission deadlines on April 1, August 1, and November 1. There are two ways to apply for the Nebraska Seal of Biliteracy:

- Individual application
- School application

### Individual Application

Students may apply for the Nebraska Seal of Biliteracy independently. All applications must be submitted within the specified time frames; late applications will not be accepted. Students are encouraged to communicate with their World Language teachers concerning requirements, preparation of the proficiency evidence, and the application process.

Students who plan to use their high school transcript as evidence of English language proficiency are encouraged to apply during the first semester of their senior year. This allows them to receive initial feedback and, if necessary, complete any missing requirements in time for the April 1 deadline, ensuring they can still earn the Seal before graduation. Applying early allows students to meet the requirements while also allowing them to highlight their Seal of Biliteracy achievement on college applications, showcasing their academic dedication, and on résumés and job applications, demonstrating their multilingual skills and making them more competitive in an increasingly global job market.

It is recommended that schools (or World Language teachers, counselors, or administrators) share information about the Nebraska Seal of Biliteracy with students in their freshman year so that they can start planning early in order to meet the requirements.

Once students are ready to apply, they must gather proficiency evidence for both English and the additional language they are applying for. Then, they should visit the Nebraska Seal of Biliteracy website and follow the application link. Detailed instructions are provided within the form to guide applicants through each step of the process.

### School Application

Due to a significant increase in the number of applications since 2020, it is recommended that schools and districts submit applications on behalf of their students. Each participating district

or school must appoint a Seal of Biliteracy Liaison to coordinate the application process. The responsibilities of the liaison include:

- Obtaining parent or guardian consent for:
- Submitting a school-level application on behalf of students
- Including student names in the NDE news release announcing awardees
- Completing the required spreadsheet with information for all student applicants
- Compiling a single PDF file containing English proficiency documentation for all students
- Compiling a single PDF file containing documentation of proficiency in the partner language(s)
- Submit the complete school application by the posted deadlines: April 1, August 1, and November 1.

It is highly recommended that the Seal of Biliteracy Liaisons contact Chrystal Liu (chrystal.liu@nebraska.gov) if they have questions.

**Medallion Purchase (Medallions are available for purchase, but not required):**

Medallion purchases can only be made during the following time frames: Orders submitted after the deadlines listed below will not be processed.

- April applications: December 2nd – April 5th;
- August applications: May 2nd – August 5th;
- November applications: August 2nd – November 5th.
- **Before purchasing:** Please verify qualifications with Chrystal Liu (chrystal.liu@nebraska.gov) before the application due dates.
- Purchasing Nebraska Seal of Biliteracy medallions
- Individual purchases: Nebraska Seal of Biliteracy Medallion Purchasing Form
- Group/school purchases: Nebraska Seal of Biliteracy Medallion Purchasing Form – School
- Please follow the instructions on the form for purchasing
- Please mail a copy of the form and the check to:

  Central Accounting

  Nebraska Department of Education,

  PO Box 94987

  Lincoln, NE 68509-4987

## Review Process

Review of Seal applications begins after the April 1st, August 1st, and November 1st due dates. Materials submitted after the due dates will not be accepted.

The Seal of Biliteracy Advisory Board teams complete the review of applications through multiple review sessions to accurately assess applicants' proficiency levels. The review of submission materials begins 4-5 days after the closing date for each round and is completed by the 20th/21st of the indicated month.

The preliminary session reviews the student-submitted materials in two teams. The first team assesses the English Proficiency materials (ONE of the following) for each applicant:

- Six COMPLETED semesters of ELA coursework (AP English courses) with a grade C or above; current enrollments do not count.
- ACT: composite score / ELA score: 18+
- AP Test Score: 3+
- An SAT score: 480+
- ELPA 21 - Combination of Scores of 4 - High School
- STAMP 4 S score: 5+

The second team in the preliminary session reviews the material submitted for Target Language Proficiency (ONE of the following) for each applicant:

- Transcript (Heritage/Native Spanish Speakers)
- STAMP 4S score: 5+
- AAPPL score: I3 +
- ALTA score: 5+
- AP Test score: 3+
- IB coursework score: 4+
- CEFR-aligned tests A2 for Silver, B1 for Gold, B2+ (advanced low and above) for Platinum

Once the preliminary review session is complete, the second session is conducted by a third team that reviews all materials and notes from the preliminary session. After both review sessions are completed, Seal awardees will be notified by the 25th of the month.

Applicants and educators should ensure that all materials are submitted promptly and contain

accurate information so that applications can be processed in a timely manner.

## Seal of Biliteracy Advisory & Review Board

To ensure the quality and validity of the Nebraska Seal of Biliteracy review process, the NDE World Language Education team established the Seal of Biliteracy Advisory Board. The board meets at least six times each year. This board serves on a two-year term and works collaboratively to:

- Monitor the Nebraska Seal of Biliteracy requirements
- Review the Nebraska Seal of Biliteracy applications
- Revise and update the Seal of Biliteracy application form
- Standardize the Seal of Biliteracy application process

The 2025–2027 Seal of Biliteracy Advisory Board includes representatives from K–12 education, higher education, and the Nebraska Department of Education. Members are Dr. Christopher Jacobs (University of Nebraska at Kearney), Dr. Chrystal Liu (Nebraska Department of Education), Danielle Fulcher (Lincoln Public Schools), Gwen Fisher (Creighton Preparatory School), Dr. Janet Eckerson (University of Nebraska at Kearney), and Hannah Paredes (Omaha Public Schools). Together, they bring diverse perspectives and expertise to ensure the Seal of Biliteracy remains a credible and meaningful recognition of students' multilingual achievement.



## Seal Endorsement - Businesses & Organizations

Proficiency in a second language is growing in importance on the job market and is becoming an integral part of college and career readiness for Nebraska students. To strengthen the importance of these connections, the Nebraska Department of Education has partnered with various organizations and businesses to endorse the Seal of Biliteracy.

Businesses, Non-Profit Organizations, and institutions of higher education that have endorsed the Seal of Biliteracy (May 2025):

- Easyway International LLC
- Heartland Steel
- ALTA Assessment
- AVANT assessment ○ Extempore
- Language Testing International
- Chinese Language Teachers Association of Nebraska ○ Education Office of the Embassy of Spain
- Lincoln Chinese Culture Association
- Midwest U.S. Commerce Representative Office of Weinan City ○ Nebraska Association of Translators and Interpreters
- Nebraska Children and Families Foundation ○ Nebraska Chinese Association
- Nebraska International Language Association ○ Nebraska Language Initiatives,
- Shaanxi Commerce Representative Office
- The University of Nebraska-Omaha (UNO), the University of Nebraska-Kearney (UNK), the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL), Doane University, and Wayne State College have endorsed the NeSoBL and attached credits to it under different conditions.

If your business or organizations want to endorse the NeSoBL, please contact Dr. Chrystal Liu at chrystal.liu@nebraska.gov

## Seal Endorsement - Higher Ed

The Seal of Biliteracy has had a significant academic impact by providing students with opportunities to earn college credit for their multilingual skills, with nearly 90 universities nationwide offering credit under their own terms (see thelist here). In Nebraska, five institutions — University of Nebraska–Lincoln (UNL), University of Nebraska-Omaha (UNO), the University of Nebraska at Kearney (UNK), Doane University, and Wayne State College— recognize the Seal's value. Some go even further to support access: UNK began to administer and proctor the STAMP 4S assessment in 2021, UNL began in 2023, allowing students to take it on campus free of charge to apply for the Seal — thanks to the leadership of Dr. Nora Peterson and Dr. Rigoberto Guevara. With the effort of Dr. Janet Eckerson, UNK has offered the assessment since 2021, coordinating with the registrar's office so that students can complete both a campus visit and the STAMP 4S on the same day. These efforts illustrate how universities can actively promote biliteracy and support student success in higher education.

## Seal Endorsement - School District

Omaha Public Schools (OPS) has become a leading example of how a district can fully integrate the Seal of Biliteracy into its educational system. OPS officially recognizes the Nebraska Seal of Biliteracy as a special diploma distinction, recording it on students' transcripts to honor their multilingual achievement. The district has also developed a mini-course to guide students through the Seal application process and to help teachers support their students in earning this credential. Demonstrating strong local ownership, OPS is currently working with the Nebraska Department of Education's World Language Specialist to establish a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that will enable the district to review its own student applications under the NDE guidance. This partnership underscores OPS's commitment to biliteracy and sets a model for how school districts can endorse and implement the Seal in sustainable, student-centered ways. If your school district is interested in integrating the Seal of Biliteracy into its system, please contact chrystal.liu@nebraska.gov.

## Nebraska Seal of Biliteracy Assessment Review and Approval Process

Assessment vendors interested in having their assessments reviewed and approved for inclusion on the Nebraska Seal of Biliteracy Approved Assessment List must complete the formal application process outlined below. This review ensures that all assessments used to qualify students for the Nebraska Seal of Biliteracy meet state expectations for measuring functional language proficiency and clearly align with the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) 2024 Proficiency Guidelines.

### Purpose of the Review

The approval process verifies that submitted assessments:

- Measure functional language performance in real-world contexts
- Demonstrate proficiency coverage from Novice Mid through Advanced levels
- Provide scoring procedures aligned to the ACTFL 2024 Proficiency Guidelines
- Maintain clear, reliable, and valid rating processes
- Offer appropriate reporting systems for schools

Assessments that primarily measure discrete grammar and vocabulary knowledge are not appropriate for Seal qualification purposes. International assessments aligned to the CEFR must include documented evidence demonstrating alignment to the ACTFL 2024 Proficiency Guidelines.

### Application Process

### Initial Contact

Email Chrystal Liu at chrystal.liu@nebraska.gov to indicate your intent to submit an assessment for review.

### Complete the Required Form

Download and complete the Assessment Guidelines for Vendors form:
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1nUMzV9k3XQVvr7yPkxMtViljJ3f0zSH1/view?usp=sharing

The completed form must address the following indicators:

- Test administration procedures, including proctoring
- Student access to the assessment
- Evidence of real-world language use in assessment tasks
- Proficiency level coverage and alignment to ACTFL 2024
- Description of the rating and scoring process
- Qualifications and ACTFL-related training of raters
- Reporting procedures for schools and districts

- Technical support for digital or online delivery
- Confirmation that the assessment measures performance/proficiency

## Submit the Application

Email the completed form and any supporting documentation to chrystal.liu@nebraska.gov.

## Advisory Board Review

Upon receipt, Chrystal Liu will convene the Nebraska Seal of Biliteracy Advisory Board to review the submission and determine approval status.

## Notification of Decision

Applicants will receive written notification of the decision within two months of submission.

## Post-Approval Status

Once approved for the Nebraska Seal of Biliteracy, the assessment is also authorized for use in awarding competency-based credit in Nebraska school districts.

For questions regarding documentation requirements or alignment expectations, please contact Chrystal Liu directly.

## Acknowledgments

The Nebraska Department of Education World Language Education team gratefully acknowledges the many individuals and groups who make the Seal of Biliteracy possible:

- The Seal of Biliteracy Advisory Board for their commitment to reviewing applications, monitoring guidelines, and maintaining the quality and integrity of the Seal process.
- The Teaching, Learning & Assessment (TL&A) Office Associates—Stacy Harvey, Suzanne Spiehs, and Stacey Weber—for their invaluable assistance in processing orders, preparing certificates, and ensuring timely mailing.
- David Jasperson and the NDE Communications Team for helping recognize Seal of Biliteracy recipients through statewide news releases and announcements.
- TL&A Supervisors Allyson DeBeste and Marissa Payzant for their continued support and strategic guidance.
- World Language educators and families across Nebraska for encouraging and supporting students in their pursuit of multilingual achievement.
- Our students, whose dedication to language learning and cultural understanding continues to inspire and elevate our shared vision for a multilingual Nebraska.

Together, your collective efforts help celebrate and advance biliteracy as a powerful asset for college, career, and civic life.

Have Questions? See our **FAQs**

