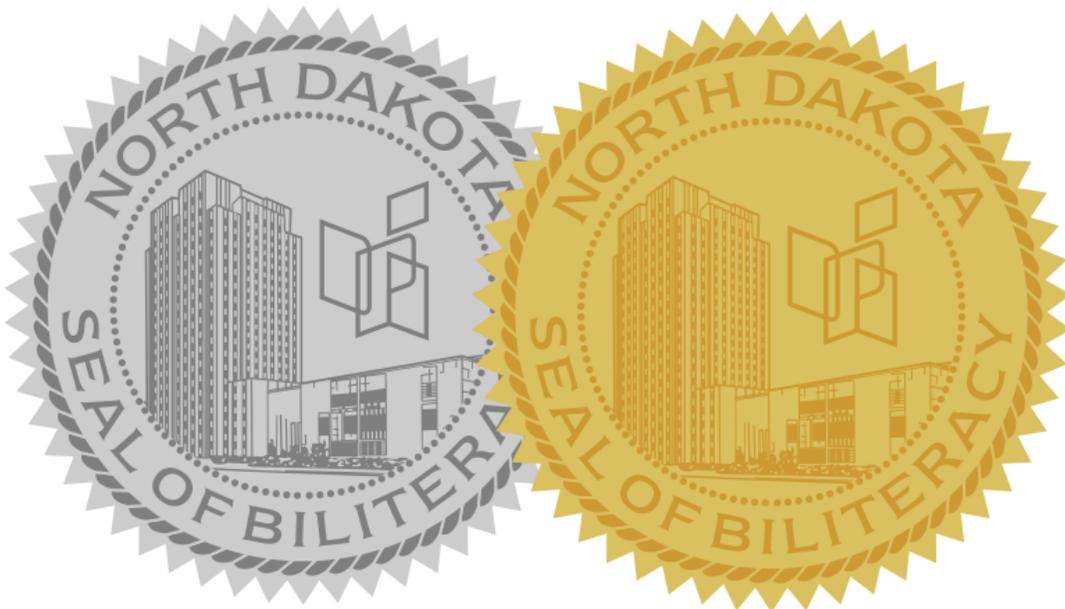# NORTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

North Dakota
Seal of Biliteracy

February 2019

Kirsten Baesler
State Superintendent
Department of Public Instruction
600 East Boulevard Avenue #201
Bismarck, ND 58505-0440
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Acknowledgements

The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (NDDPI) would like to thank and acknowledge individuals who assisted in the collaborative development of this opportunity for students.

ND Department of Public Instruction Staff

Graphic Design

NDSB Task Force Members

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INTRODUCTION

The North Dakota Seal of Biliteracy (NDSB) is an award presented to graduating students who have demonstrated proficiency in a language in addition to English.

North Dakota joins more than half of the nation in awarding a Seal of Biliteracy. The NDSB is established to recognize students and provide an identifier of this accomplishment for employers and post-secondary institutions. The NDSB serves to inspire the implementation of biliteracy programs and pathways of language development in districts across the state and help districts demonstrate value in diversity/culture.

The NDSB shall be awarded by the NDDPI in accordance with specified criteria set forth in this guidance document. Each student will receive a seal to be placed on the high school diploma, a certificate from the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, and an indicator on the student's eTranscript. School district participation in the program is voluntary and schools are encouraged to ensure cost is not a barrier for students to apply for the award.

Value of Learning and Maintaining World Languages and Cultures

Developing language proficiency and cultural competence strengthens intergroup relationships, affirms the value of diversity, and honors the multiple cultures and languages of our communities and state. North Dakota's adoption of the Seal of Biliteracy sets a standard of the value in learning world languages, as well as maintaining native and heritage languages and cultures in our schools, homes, and communities.

The numerous cognitive and social benefits for students learning more than one language are well documented and include improvements in executive functioning, working memory, attention span, flexibility, creative thinking, greater intercultural awareness, and open-mindedness (Davin & Heineke, 2017).

National and Global Competitiveness

In accordance with graduating students "Choice Ready," the NDSB will highlight students' efforts in global competence. Choice Ready refers not only to successful completion of coursework, but also to the recognition and acceptance of skills and knowledge gained beyond the classroom. The NDSB honors language proficiency regardless of where or how it is acquired. The advancement of technology has brought the world closer together physically and communicatively. Modern technology makes the communication of ideas almost instantaneous and physical presence available within 24 hours for most places in the world. Despite modern technologies, the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately continues to be critical in numerous career fields.

Career Readiness

In a recent survey of U.S. employers, 66% reported valuing foreign language skills in the hiring process and 41% reported giving preference to multilingual job candidates (Damari et al., 2017). There is also a growing need for bilingual employees across a wide range of occupations, regardless of educational requirements or salary (New American Economy, 2017). The NDSB serves as an identifier to employers that a high school graduate enters the workforce with highly-desirable skills in more than one language.

The North Dakota Seal of Biliteracy provides multiple pathways for students to achieve the Seal by honoring, encouraging, and recognizing that students may already have achieved high levels of proficiency in English and one or more languages and may earn the Seal of Biliteracy through a demonstration of proficiency. The efforts to maintain languages and to enhance the skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing will enable students to achieve the necessary proficiency to obtain the NDSB and support their future career and educational opportunities.

District Policy

District governing bodies are encouraged to create a policy of participation in the NDSB program. This validates the value of the NDSB and the skills of bilingualism. It is this process that provides the opportunity for the district and community to articulate how and why language diversity is important and the vision for future language instruction. Districts and schools are encouraged to award the NDSB certificate as part of graduation or senior award ceremonies. Districts could also include additional recognition items such as sashes, cords, medals, etc. For additional ideas on presentation, refer to the award presentation section on page six.

Sociocultural Competence

An important component of the NDSB is also improving students' sociocultural competence. Sociocultural competence is the knowledge of circumstances surrounding individuals and how their behaviors are affected by social and cultural factors such as customs, values, attitudes, traditions, religion, politics, communication, ethnicity, race, gender, socioeconomic status, and others. Sociocultural competence also includes an ability to interact effectively with people of different cultures and socio-economic backgrounds. Cultural competence comprises four components: (a) awareness of one's own cultural worldview, (b) attitude towards cultural differences, (c) knowledge of different cultural practices and worldviews, and (d) cross-cultural skills. Developing sociocultural competence results in an ability to understand, communicate with, and effectively interact with people across cultures.

Districts are encouraged to examine current practices and work to improve students' sociocultural competence throughout their educational career. The pathway for sociocultural competence would be most powerful if initiated in the very early grades. (Reference, 2019)

District Pathways

Districts are encouraged to consider implementing pathways toward biliteracy and the NDSB in which students have opportunities to study language in earlier grades and whose progress is acknowledged along the path to proficiency. To encourage students to study languages and develop mastery in multiple languages, pathway acknowledgements are most powerful when earned at crucial points along the schooling journey where student attitudes about bilingualism may be changing or where students may be facing choices about enrolling in programs and courses that can lead to biliteracy. These points could include: Kindergarten, 3rd grade, end of elementary school, and end of middle school. Pathway awards may be given in recognition of attainment of an age-appropriate level of

skill in mastering two or more languages or in recognition of participation in activities involving bilingualism. This may be done through participation or grade level awards. Districts may consider honoring students with recognition ceremonies, publication of awardees in the media, small trophies, certificates, medals, or another honor of the district's choosing. More information on implementing pathways can be found on the [Seal of Biliteracy](#) website.

Course of Study

Districts are encouraged to support multiple opportunities for students to pursue dual or multiple language proficiency. The NDSB is not designed to dictate a specific course of study, but rather to honor diverse pathways to achieve biliteracy, promote active engagement in pursuing it, and ultimately recognize that achievement. The following are examples of various pathways to biliteracy.

Academic Coursework

The most familiar method of learning a world language or acquiring English as an additional language is through PreK-12 academic coursework such as: traditional world language classes, English language development instruction, bilingual and immersion programs, dual credit enrollment in community college/university courses, Advanced Placement courses, International Baccalaureate language and literature courses, and study abroad or exchange programs. These are all viable means for attaining proficiency in a world language or English as an additional language.

Heritage Language Acquisition

Many students in the United States are raised in a bilingual or multilingual environment; homes in which a language other than English is spoken. Others may participate in a heritage language revitalization program. These students acquire language through the experience of interacting with family members, friends, and neighbors. In some cases, language may be incorporated into school programs. Heritage language speakers possess skills necessary for our national security and prosperity and are an essential component of our multilingual/multicultural society.

Home Language Maintenance

The home language is a first or native language a student has been exposed to since birth or during a child's formative years. Deliberate efforts to maintain the native language are prevalent within many culturally and linguistically diverse families and communities.

Districts are encouraged to support student participation in activities where the home language is used. Multimedia, community organizations, ethnic or cultural marketplaces, etc., can be very beneficial to students and society. Recognizing the value of maintaining the home language sustains important direct cultural ties to students' respective families, communities, and their heritage. These efforts to preserve the native language must be in place as students become more immersed in English as the dominant language.

Demonstration of Knowledge in English

To be eligible for an NDSB award, each student shall demonstrate proficiency in reading, writing, speaking, and listening in English. The requirement is based on the NDDPI Choice Ready initiative and must be met during the course of each student's high school years (grades 9-12). The student must attain one of the following assessment options to demonstrate a minimum proficiency in English:

Exam	Silver	Gold
ACT	ELA 16	ELA 19
ND English Language Proficiency Assessment (ACCESS for ELLs)	3.5 in each domain AND 4.0 Composite	3.5 in each domain AND 5.0 Composite
SAT	ERW 460	ERW 480
ND State Assessment in grades 9-12	Proficient in ELA	Proficient in ELA
Other*		

*Districts may submit a request to the NDDPI for an alternative English requirement.

Demonstration of Knowledge in World Language(s)

All students must provide evidence of a specific level of proficiency in a language in addition to English. Students must demonstrate proficiency in the modes of communication appropriate for that language; not all languages have all modes of communication. The language performance must be demonstrated in both social and academic (content-based) use of the language, where possible.

Awards require minimum levels comparable to the ACTFL proficiency guidelines of Intermediate Low (IL) to earn the silver seal or Intermediate High (IH) to earn the gold seal. A student must attain one of the following levels for the corresponding assessments listed to demonstrate a minimum proficiency in a world language:

Exam	Silver	Gold
ACTFL (OPI,WPT,RPT,LPT)	IL	IH
AAPPL	I-1	I-5
ALIRA	I-1	I-4
STAMP	4	6
ASLPI	2+	3+
DELE/DELF	A2	B1
Other*		

*Districts may submit a request to the NDDPI for an alternative requirement.

Unique Circumstances of Language

Due to unique characteristics of certain languages, special allowances may need to be made. Students seeking the Seal through languages not characterized by the use of listening, speaking, reading, or for which there is not a writing system, will demonstrate the expected level of proficiency on an assessment of the modalities that characterize communication in that language. In cases where language assessments across all four

modes of communication may not be appropriate or available, districts must contact the NDDPI to request exemption or variation of any language modalities.

Demonstration of Sociocultural Competency

Students eligible for a NDSB must also demonstrate high levels of sociocultural competence. Decisions on measures of sociocultural competency are determined by the district and could include measures for demonstrating positive attitudes towards bilingualism, participation in experiential learning activities, or using both languages in culturally appropriate ways. Districts are encouraged to develop rubrics to use in the evaluation of sociocultural competency and articulate minimum criteria for achievement in this area. Some activities that demonstrate sociocultural competence may include:

- Active participation in multicultural community events;
- Completion of a specific amount of community service using the partner language skills in service to school or community; or
- Documentation of independent reading in English and a partner language.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Participating school districts in North Dakota are responsible for implementing a process to support students in meeting the requirements for the NDSB. This includes ensuring students and families receive information regarding the program and requirements, as well as, assisting and tracking the students' testing and progress toward the award.

To apply for an award, the district must submit the NDSB Application Form with the district contact information, applicable assessment information and assurances of student eligibility and sociocultural competence. The application must be signed by the district Superintendent or designee. If the district has multiple students applying for the awards, please submit the Multiple Student Application Addendum with the NDSB Application Form.

Although there is no official due date, the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (NDDPI) will process requests for awards for the 2018–19 school year upon receipt. Please submit requests at least four weeks in advance of the date of the graduation ceremony to allow time for the NDDPI to process the requests and for school staff to affix the insignia to student diplomas.

SEAL DESIGNS

The NDSB will be awarded as a physical gold or silver foil seal mailed to the district. The official North Dakota Seals are pictured below:

AWARD PRESENTATIONS

Demonstrating proficiency in English and one or more world languages is a worthy accomplishment. Students who earn the NDSB should be recognized and celebrated by their peers, teachers, families, communities, and the state.

Districts and schools may consider providing students who earn the NDSB with a physical award in addition to the seal on the diploma. Awards may be presented or highlighted at the ceremonies described above. Awards may include items such as patches or trophies, as well as, cords, sashes, medals, ribbons, or mortarboard tassels to be worn at graduation or awards ceremonies.

Upon parental approval, the NDDPI will recognize students who receive the NDSB through the NDDPI website and/or social media. The website may feature school and district success stories, as well as post-secondary accomplishments of Seal recipients. The NDDPI will also provide support of the NDSB program by posting information on the department's website such as guidance and data statistics.

Districts are encouraged to congratulate students through media outlets of the district, local school and community partners such as district/school websites, social media, local cable networks, tribal and local press releases, the chambers of commerce, foundations working with diverse communities, at award and honorary assemblies or receptions and meetings of local boards of education.

Local school board meetings can provide an excellent venue to celebrate students' biliteracy accomplishments. Students could receive recognition at board meetings by being presented their NDSB certificate. Recognizing students at local school board meetings can also provide recognition of students who are not approved until after graduation due to delayed test results or requirements.

REFERENCES

Damari, R.R., Rivers, W.P., Brecht, R.D., Gardner, P., Pulupa, C., & Robinson, J. (2017). The demand for multilingual human capital in the U.S. labor market. *Foreign Language Annals, 50*(1), 13-37.

Davin, K.J., & Heineke, A.J. (2017). The seal of biliteracy: variations in policy and outcomes. *Foreign Language Annals.*

New American Economy (2017). *Not lost in translation: the growing importance of foreign language skills in the U.S. job market.* Retrieved from www.leadwithlanguages.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/NAE_Bilingual_V6.pdf

Reference (2019). *What Are Examples of Sociocultural Factors?* Retrieved from www.reference.com/world-view/examples-sociocultural-factors-16d3d81637f83a47

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RESOURCES

The following resources are available on the NDDPI website under [Biliteracy Seal](#).

NDSB Application Form – Appendix A

School district staff must complete this form and submit it to the NDDPI to request the diploma insignia, certificate, and eTranscript identification for eligible students.

Multiple Student Application Addendum – Appendix B

If the district has more than two or three students requesting awards, please submit the NDSB Application Form and the Multiple Student Application Addendum.

NDSB Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) – Appendix C

The NDDPI has created this document of frequently asked questions regarding the NDSB and will add to them as additional questions arise.

NDSB Student Tracking Checklist – Appendix D (for district use only)

This checklist is for local use only and should not be submitted to the NDDPI. School district or school staff may use this form to identify/track students who are on the path to attain the NDSB.

NDSB Student Photo Release – Appendix E

The photo release is necessary for the NDDPI to showcase student award winners through the NDDPI website and/or social media.

North Dakota Seal of Biliteracy
Application Form

District Information				
District:		Request Date:		
School:		Graduation Year:		
Contact Person/Position:		Graduation Date:		
Phone:		Email:		
Address:				
City/State/Zip:				

	Number of students included in this application submission for the ND Seal of Biliteracy.

STUDENT 1

Last Name:		First Name:		State ID #:			
Student is a(n):	☐ English Learner (EL)	☐ Former English Learner (FEL)		☐ Never English Learner (NEL)		☐ World Language Learner (WLL)	
Applying for Which Seal?	☐ Gold	☐ Silver	Years in Language Instruction		☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5+

Sociocultural Competence	
☐	The district assures this student has demonstrated **SOCIOCULTURAL COMPETENCE** according to the requirements set forth by the district.

World Language Requirement (include one for each language other than English)

Language	Assessment	Date Completed	Score	Level

English Requirement (Check and complete at least **ONE** the student has fulfilled)

	Assessment	Date Completed	Score
☐	NDSA in grades 9-12		
☐	ACT English		
☐	ND ELP Assessment (ACCESS)		
☐	SAT English		

STUDENT 2

Last Name:		First Name:		State ID #:	
Student is a(n):	☐ English Learner (EL)	☐ Former English Learner (FEL)	☐ Never English Learner (NEL)	☐ World Language Learner (WLL)	
Applying for Which Seal?	☐ Gold	☐ Silver	Years in Language Instruction	☐ 2 ☐ 3	☐ 4 ☐ 5+

Sociocultural Competence	
☐	The district assures this student has demonstrated **SOCIOCULTURAL COMPETENCE** according to the requirements set forth by the district.

World Language Requirement (include one for each language other than English)

Language	Assessment	Date Completed	Score	Level

English Requirement (Check and complete at least **ONE** the student has fulfilled)

	Assessment	Date Completed	Score
☐	NDSA in Grades 9-12		
☐	ACT English		
☐	ND ELP Assessment (ACCESS)		
☐	SAT English		

_____   _____
District Superintendent Signature   Date

_____
Print Name

Submit Application to:

Lodee Arnold, Assistant Director
ND Seal of Biliteracy
North Dakota Department of Public Instruction
600 E Boulevard Ave, Dept. 201
Bismarck, ND 58505

North Dakota Seal of Biliteracy
Application Instructions

1. Complete the District Information section for the district from which the student(s) is graduating. This is where and to whom the certificate(s) and seal(s) will be sent.

2. Indicate the number of students included in the application. This tells the NDDPI staff whether or not additional pages are expected.

3. Complete the student section for each student applying for a seal. If the district has more than two students eligible, the district may either add additional pages of page two or use the NDSB Multiple Student Application Addendum spreadsheet to accompany the district application above.
   a. Student Last Name, First Name
   b. Student State ID: The 9-digit state ID number assigned by STARS
   c. Please indicate if the student is an English learner, Former English learner (exited the program), Never English learner (never identified as EL), world language learner (native English speaker learning a world language)
   d. Applying for which seal: Check the seal for which the student qualifies, if the student qualifies for more than one, input the number of gold or silver seals for which the student qualifies
   e. Years in language instruction: Indicate number of years of world language instruction or EL identification
   f. Sociocultural Competence: Check the box to indicate assurance the student has met the district expectations of sociocultural competency
   g. World language requirement: indicate the language for which the student is testing, the assessment(s) taken (be sure to assess all four domains of listening, speaking, reading and writing), the score the student received, the level of proficiency (comparable to ACTFL levels) to which the score is equivalent
   h. English language requirement: check the box for at least one English requirement the student has fulfilled, input the date the assessment was completed and the score the student received
4. Be sure the application is signed by the district Superintendent or designee with a printed name and date below.

North Dakota Seal of Biliteracy
Multiple Student Application Addendum

	Student Information			Applying for:		Type of Language Learner:				Assurance of Sociocultural Competency
	Last Name	First Name	State I.D.#	Silver	Gold	EL	Former EL	Never EL	World LL	
1				☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2				☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3				☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4				☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5				☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6				☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7				☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8				☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
9				☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10				☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
11				☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
12				☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
13				☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
14				☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
15				☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
16				☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
17				☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
18				☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
19				☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
20				☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

North Dakota Seal of Biliteracy
Multiple Student Application Addendum

	Yrs of Language Instruction				World Language Requirement					English Requirement		
	2	3	4	5+	Language	Assessment	Date Completed	Score	Level	Assessment	Date Completed	Score
1	☐	☐	☐	☐								
2	☐	☐	☐	☐								
3	☐	☐	☐	☐								
4	☐	☐	☐	☐								
5	☐	☐	☐	☐								
6	☐	☐	☐	☐								
7	☐	☐	☐	☐								
8	☐	☐	☐	☐								
9	☐	☐	☐	☐								
10	☐	☐	☐	☐								
11	☐	☐	☐	☐								
12	☐	☐	☐	☐								
13	☐	☐	☐	☐								
14	☐	☐	☐	☐								
15	☐	☐	☐	☐								
16	☐	☐	☐	☐								
17	☐	☐	☐	☐								
18	☐	☐	☐	☐								
19	☐	☐	☐	☐								
20	☐	☐	☐	☐								

North Dakota Seal of Biliteracy
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. **What is the North Dakota Seal of Biliteracy?**
   The North Dakota Seal of Biliteracy (NDSB) is an award presented to graduating students who have demonstrated proficiency in a language in addition to English. North Dakota offers two seals; silver and gold. Each seal has specific criteria a student must meet to receive the award. The requirements are available in the NDSB Guidance.

2. **Why implement a Seal of Biliteracy?**
   The NDSB encourages students to develop mastery in multiple languages, encourages students to pursue biliteracy, honors the skills our students attain, and can be evidence of skills that are attractive to future employers and college admissions offices. The NDSB sets a standard of the value in learning world languages, as well as maintaining native and heritage languages and cultures in our schools, homes, and communities.

3. **What are the benefits of earning a North Dakota Seal of Biliteracy?**
   The NDSB recognizes students and provides an identifier of this accomplishment on the student's eTranscript for employers and post-secondary institutions.

4. **What are the requirements for a North Dakota Seal of Biliteracy?**
   To be eligible for an NDSB award, each student shall demonstrate proficiency in reading, writing, speaking, and listening in English and an additional language. Students must also demonstrate sociocultural competency as determined by each district. The assessments and required proficiency levels are as follows:

One of the following assessment options is required to demonstrate proficiency in English:

Exam	Silver	Gold
ACT	ELA 16	ELA 19
ND English Language Proficiency Assessment (ACCESS for ELLs)	3.5 in each domain AND 4.0 Composite	3.5 in each domain AND 5.0 Composite
SAT	ERW 460	ERW 480
ND State Assessment in grades 9-12	Proficient in ELA	Proficient in ELA

One of the following assessment options is required to demonstrate proficiency in a world language:

Exam	Silver	Gold
ACTFL (OPI,WPT,RPT,LPT)	IL	IH
AAPPL	I-1	I-5
ALIRA	I-1	I-4
STAMP	4	6
ASLPI	2+	3+
DELE/DELF	A2	B1

*Districts may submit a request to the NDDPI for alternative assessment requirements.

5. Can a student be awarded for multiple languages?

Yes, if a student meets the requirements for more than one language in addition to English, the student will be awarded one seal for each applicable language.

6. How can schools/districts obtain state seals and certificates?

The district must submit the NDSB Application Form with the district contact information, applicable assessment information and assurances of student eligibility and sociocultural competence to the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (NDDPI). The application must be signed by the district Superintendent or designee. If the district has multiple students applying for the awards, please submit the Multiple Student Application Addendum with the NDSB Application Form. The application forms and information can be found on the NDSB webpage at www.nd.gov/dpi/SchoolStaff/IME/sealofbiliteracy.

7. Which states have adopted or offer the Seal of Biliteracy?

Information and other state programs are available at https://sealofbiliteracy.org/.

APPENDIX D

ND Seal of Biliteracy Requirements
Student Tracking Checklist
(For District Use Only)

Student Name	Graduation Year

English Requirement (Check and complete at least **ONE** the student has fulfilled)

	Assessment	Date Completed	Score
☐	NDSA in grades 9-12		
☐	ACT English		
☐	ND ELP Assessment (ACCESS)		
☐	SAT English		

World Language Requirement (Include for each language other than English)

Language	Assessment	Date Completed	Score	Level

Sociocultural Competence

Activity	Date Completed	Notes

NORTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

DIVISION OF STUDENT SUPPORT & INNOVATION
OFFICE OF INDIAN/MULTICULTRAL EDUCATION

ND Seal of Biliteracy
Student Photo Release

I, _____ (parent/guardian) give the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (NDDPI) permission to use my child's name, photograph, photographic image, or video in official ND Seal of Biliteracy business, including: NDDPI website, SharePoint groups/Teams, social media, newsletters, and promotional or informational webinars and trainings.

I hereby waive any right to inspect or approve the finish product in which a photograph or video image of my child may be used.

Date _____

Child's Name: _____

Parent/Guardian's Name: _____

Parent/Guardian's Signature: _____