

## STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION – TOPIC SUMMARY

**Topic:** Oregon State Seal of Biliteracy

**Date:** December 11, 2014

**Staff/Office:** David Bautista (Assistant Superintendent - Education Equity Unit), Tim Blackburn  
(Education Specialist – Education Equity Unit)

**Action Requested:**  Informational Only  Adoption  Adoption/Consent Agenda

### ISSUE BEFORE THE BOARD:

Present a pilot project to determine the feasibility of a State Seal of Biliteracy

### BACKGROUND:

The Oregon Diploma requirements were adopted by the State Board of Education in 2007. Those requirements include a minimum number of credits in a variety of academic content areas, demonstration of proficiency in the Essential Skills (Reading, Writing, Math), and personalized learning requirements. In an effort to formally recognize the attainment of mastery in two or more languages, the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) is piloting a State Seal of Biliteracy Seal to honor the skills students have acquired, providing evidence of proficiency that may be attractive to future employers and college admissions offices.

The Oregon State Seal of Biliteracy is designed to provide a rigorous, proficiency-based recognition of the linguistic assets and academic skills of biliterate graduates. The Seal creates multiple pathways for students to demonstrate their language proficiency, irrespective of the partner language. With the Seal in hand, students will have a standardized measure of their language proficiency to document and project their skills to college and career pathways.

### POLICY QUESTIONS:

- How do we create a State Seal of Biliteracy that upholds rigorous standards, and demonstrates college and career readiness in more than one language?
- How do we create multiple pathways to the State Seal of Biliteracy to reduce barriers and encourage more students to develop their literacy skills in more than one language?

### STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

ODE staff urge the State Board of Education to continue our commitment of the Equity lens by supporting the Oregon State Seal of Biliteracy. Feedback during the pilot phase will help ODE further improve this work.

The State Seal of Biliteracy would follow a staggered implementation, using the 2014-2015 school year as a pilot year to operationalize and test the Seal's criteria. At the close of the 2014-2015 school year, project stakeholders will meet to reflect and revise project processes. These reflections will inform final Seal policy to present to the State Board of Education for adoption in the Fall of 2015 for formal statewide implementation in the 2015-2016 school year.

The attached description outlines the criteria for the State Seal of Biliteracy that was developed with the Stakeholder Panel. The panel convened three times in the Fall of 2014, once in a large in-person gathering in September, followed by subsequent web-based sessions. The criteria developed by the Panel is attached to this summary. Additionally, there is a feedback form gathered from stakeholders attached.