

Dear Seal of Biliteracy Coordinators,

I hope that the 2021-22 academic year is off to a great start and your school is considering offering the New York State Seal of Biliteracy (NYSSB) once again this year! Let me start by congratulating you, the 324 district, charter, and non-public schools in our state that awarded the NYSSB to more than 5,400 students last year, amidst the very challenging constraints imposed by the pandemic. We have made a number of changes to streamline the NYSSB process and improve the experience of Seal Coordinators and schools.

Here is a summary of what's new for the NYSSB in 2021-22:

1. The [NYSSB website](#) has been revamped with added resources. Please consider bookmarking this page for future reference.
2. The **NYSSB Handbook** is being revised to include updated guidance (e.g., exemptions, additional approved assessments). We anticipate this will be released in mid-October. A copy of the updated Handbook will be emailed out to all Seal Coordinators on record when it is available.
3. The [Criteria to earn the NYSSB](#) (see graphic on last page) was revised by the NYS Board of Regents in March 2021 and includes the following changes:
  - a. The language of the coursework criteria (1C-ELA; 2A-World Language; 2C-Home Language Arts) was aligned.
  - b. The [list of approved assessments for English \(1D\) and World Languages \(2D\)](#) was significantly expanded. An [updated list of approved World Language Assessments](#) organized by language is also provided. These lists are available on the website and will be included in the Handbook.
  - c. **Exemptions**
    - i. Students who received an exemption from an ELA Regents exam during the COVID-19 pandemic, including June 2020, August 2020, January 2021, June 2021, and August 2021 administrations of the exam, have earned a point toward criterion 1A of the NYSSB. To be eligible to receive these exemptions, students must have been enrolled in and received credit for the course that normally culminates in the ELA Regents exam.
    - ii. ELLs who received an exemption from two Regents Exams other than English (June 2020, August 2020, January 2021, June 2021, and/or August 2021) under the COVID guidance issued by NYSED have earned a point for criterion 1A toward the NYSSB. These exemptions follow the student through graduation. (Students may only earn 1 point for criterion 1A.)

4. Changes in Required Forms (2021-22)

Form	Due Date	Changes
NYSSB School Notification Form ( <a href="#">Template</a> ) ( <a href="#">Online form</a> )	December 1st	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 4-page form reduced to 2 pages</li><li>• Added: contact information for the District Data Coordinator</li><li>• Deleted: BEDS code, race/ethnicity information, and the criteria checklist</li></ul>
Culminating Project form* ( <a href="#">Template</a> ) ( <a href="#">Online form</a> )	March 15th (changed from April 15th)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• New due date</li><li>• 2-page form reduced to a single page</li></ul>

Form	Due Date	Changes
Seal Request form	n/a	This form has been completely eliminated. (Any necessary information has been incorporated into the End of Year Data form.)
End of Year Data Form ( <a href="#">Excel spreadsheet</a> )	May 5th (changed from May 31st)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New due date</li> <li>• Added: Student participation in Puerto Rican Hispanic Youth Leadership Institute (PRHYLI) program, Seal request information, Designee to handle issues during summer</li> <li>• Graduation month/year field replaces “Student is a graduating senior” field.</li> <li>• Deleted: BEDS code</li> </ul>

\*The process of NYSED visits at Culminating Project Presentations was put on hold over the last two years due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. We are cautiously optimistic that we will be able to conduct these visits in the spring of 2021-22 in three to five schools in each of the seven regions of New York State. Only schools who have offered the NYSSB for at least two years are eligible to be selected for a visit. **If** selected, schools will be notified no later than March 31st.

5. **Culminating Project Rubrics** – The guidance from NYSED has always required that school-based rubrics to evaluate Culminating Projects be aligned to the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines. However, up until now, our office did not have the capacity to carefully review school-based rubrics. Starting in 2021-22, all school-based rubrics (including consortium-created rubrics) will be evaluated by OBEWL using [a 5-point rubric](#) that ensures the necessary alignment. When schools submit their NYSSB School Notification form, they must certify that their school-based rubric meets the following five criteria:

- Is proficiency in the language being assessed the **only** aspect that is assessed on the school’s Culminating Project rubric?
- Are the column headings of the school’s Culminating Project rubric labeled with ACTFL proficiency levels?
- Are the performance descriptors in the school’s Culminating Project rubric aligned to ACTFL proficiency levels?
- Does the school’s Culminating Project rubric indicate the proficiency level required to earn the NYSSB?
- Does the school’s Culminating Project rubric separately address all three modes of communication (interpretive, interpersonal, presentational)?

To model a properly-aligned rubric, OBEWL has created a rubric for Culminating projects, which schools may choose to use instead of creating their own. This rubric has been simplified and is closely aligned to the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines. OBEWL-created rubrics are available for [Category 1-2 Modern Languages](#) (e.g., English, French, German, Italian, Spanish), [Category 3-4 Modern Languages](#) (e.g., Arabic, Greek, Hebrew, Japanese, Korean, Mandarin), and [Classical Languages](#) (e.g., Latin). These rubrics can be used for Culminating Projects in English and World Languages.

6. **New York State of Biliteracy Forum** - OBEWL has created the New York State Seal of Biliteracy Forum, a monthly meeting offering guidance and support on the NYSSB, as well as the opportunity for participants to ask questions, discuss, and network with other coordinators. Attendance at meetings is completely voluntary and CTLE credit will be awarded on a semester basis for any meetings attended. All meetings for 2021-22 will be on Wednesdays from 3:00-4:00 p.m. Topics will be posted in advanced

so that coordinators can choose to attend one, several, or all meetings, depending on their needs. Minutes will be made available on a shared Google drive for when participants are unable to attend a particular meeting. To register, please complete the following [brief Google form](#). by October 18th. The Zoom meeting link will be sent out on a rolling basis upon receipt of the registration form. Forum meetings will take place on the following dates:

- October 20th
- November 3rd
- December 1st
- January 12th
- February 9th
- March 9th
- April 6th
- May 4th
- June 1st

7. **One-page flyers on the NYSSB** are now available on our website for [Students](#), [Parents](#), [Teachers](#), [Counselors and Administrators](#), [Culminating Project Advisors](#), and [Panelists](#). These are a valuable tool to promote the Seal within your school community. The Parent one-pager is being translated in the top 10 languages spoken by families of English Language Learners in New York State. These will be posted to our website as soon as they are available.
8. **Digital Badges** – OBEWL will be providing digital badges to all participating NYSSB schools for each year of participation, include special badges for 1st year schools, those who have offered the Seal 5 or more years, and schools with NYSSB earners in two or more world languages in addition to English. Schools may post these badges on their NYSSB websites, use them for bulletin board displays, and include them in communications with family and the larger school community. Badges will be emailed directly to the Seal Coordinator on record by Monday, October 4th.
9. We are working diligently on the **2020-21 NYSSB Annual Report** and anticipate its publication by the end of October, along with regional infographics. To view past year's reports, go to the NYSSB website and click on "NYSSB Annual Reports".



Please accept my best wishes for a successful school year and let me know how I can support you in offering the New York State Seal of Biliteracy program at your school or district. Should you have any questions, please reach out to me ([nyssb@nysed.gov](mailto:nyssb@nysed.gov); 518.473.7505)

**Criteria to Earn the New York State Seal of Biliteracy (NYSSB)**

- A. Students wishing to receive the NYSSB must complete all requirements for graduating with a NYS Regents diploma\*;  
 B. In addition to the above minimum requirement, students wishing to receive the NYSSB must earn three (3) points from the English criteria and three (3) points from the World Language criteria.

CRITERIA FOR DEMONSTRATING PROFICIENCY IN ENGLISH	POINT VALUE	CRITERIA FOR DEMONSTRATING PROFICIENCY IN A WORLD LANGUAGE	POINT VALUE
<b>1A.</b> Score 80 or higher on the NYS Regents Examination in English Language Arts** or English Language Learners (ELLs) score 75 or above on two Regents exams other than English**, without translation.	1	<b>2A.</b> Complete a Checkpoint C level World Language course, with a grade of 85 or higher, or a comparable score using another scoring system set by the district and approved by the Commissioner, consistent with Checkpoint C standards.	1
<b>1B.</b> ELLs earn an overall score of 290 or better on the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESLAT) during 9th-12th grades.	1	<b>2B.</b> Provide transcripts from a school in a country outside of the U.S. showing at least three years of instruction in the student’s home/native language in Grade 8 or beyond, with an equivalent grade average of B or higher.	1
<b>1C.</b> Complete all 11th- and 12th-grade ELA courses with an average of 85 or higher or a comparable score using another scoring system set by the district and approved by the Commissioner.	1	<b>2C.</b> For students enrolled in a Bilingual Education program, complete all required Home Language Arts (HLA) coursework with an 85 or higher or a comparable score using another scoring system set by the district and approved by the Commissioner.	1
<b>1D.</b> Score at a proficient level on an approved English assessment (See “Approved English Assessments” on page 50.)	1	<b>2D.</b> Score at a proficient level on an accredited Checkpoint C World Language assessment (See “Checkpoint C World Language Assessments and Minimum Scores” on pages 51-53.)	1
<b>1E.</b> Present a Culminating Project that meets the criteria for speaking, listening, reading, and writing established by the district’s NYS Seal of Biliteracy Committee to a panel of reviewers with proficiency in English.	2	<b>2E.</b> Present a Culminating Project that meets the criteria for speaking, listening, reading, and writing established by the district’s NYS Seal of Biliteracy Committee and that is aligned to the NYS Checkpoint C Learning Standards to a panel of reviewers with proficiency in the target language.	2

Testing accommodations recommended in an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or section 504 Accommodations Plan must be provided for all State and districtwide assessments administered to students with disabilities, as consistent with State policy. Students with disabilities should also receive these testing accommodations on Checkpoint C World Language Assessments, as permitted.

\* Students in schools with an alternate pathway for graduation approved by the Commissioner will be held to those schools' criteria.