HB46

215774-1

By Representatives Collins and Meadows

RFD: Education Policy

First Read: 11-JAN-22

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SYNOPSIS: This bill would establish the State Seal of Biliteracy program to recognize graduates who have attained a high level of proficiency in speaking, reading, and writing in one or more languages in addition to English, and would provide for the seal to be awarded to the graduate by the State Department of Education.

A BILL
TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

Relating to education; to establish the State Seal of Biliteracy; to recognize graduates who have demonstrated an indicated level of proficiency in English and at least one other world language, including American Sign Language.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA:

Section 1. (a) The State Department of Education shall develop and award a State Seal of Biliteracy to those high school students who have demonstrated an indicated level
of proficiency in English and at least one other world
language, including American Sign Language. School district
participation in the program is voluntary.

(b) The purposes of the State Seal of Biliteracy are
as follows:

(1) To encourage students to study languages.
(2) To certify attainment of biliteracy.
(3) To provide employers with a method of
identifying people proficient in language and biliteracy
skills.
(4) To provide institutions of higher education with
a method to recognize and give academic credit to applicants
seeking admission.
(5) To prepare students with 21st Century skills.
(6) To recognize and promote world language
instruction in public schools.
(7) To strengthen intergroup relationships, affirm
the value of diversity, and honor the multiple cultures and
languages of a community.

Section 2. The State Seal of Biliteracy certifies
attainment of an intermediate level of proficiency by a
graduating student in English and at least one other world
language, and certifies that the graduate meets all of the
following criteria:

(1) Completion of the graduation requirements of the
high school.
(2) English language proficiency: The student shall demonstrate proficiency in the English language, through one of the following approaches, or as provided by any future equivalent national normed benchmark approved as part of the program:

a. ACT English: A score of 18 or higher.
b. ACT reading: A score of 20 or higher.
c. Advanced Placement Language Examination: A score of three or higher.
d. International Baccalaureate Examination: A score of five or higher.
e. WIDA ACCESS 2.0: For non-native English speakers, the student shall meet and maintain Alabama exit criteria in English proficiency.
f. American Council of Teachers of Foreign Language Assessment of Performance toward Proficiency in Languages: For non-native English speakers, an intermediate Mid-3 or higher score in English.

(3) World language proficiency: The student shall demonstrate proficiency in one or more languages other than English through one of the following approaches:

a. If the language other than English may be assessed by a standardized examination, students shall attain the minimum score on one of the following assessments:

1. The Advanced Placement Language Examination: A score of three or higher.
2. American Council of Teachers of Foreign Language
Assessment of Performance toward Proficiency in Languages: An
Intermediate Mid-3 or higher score in all four components.

3. International Baccalaureate Examination with a
score of four or higher.

of level B1 or higher.

5. Standards-based Measurement of Proficiency: A
score of intermediate-mid level or higher.

6. American Council of Teachers of Foreign Language
Oral Proficiency Interview Writing Proficiency Test: A score
of intermediate-mid level.

7. American Council of Teachers of Foreign Language
Latin Interpretive Reading Assessment: A score of
intermediate-mid level three or higher.

8. Sign Language: Sign Language Proficiency
Interview, American Sign Language Proficiency Interview, or
Assessment of Performance toward Proficiency in Languages: A
score of intermediate plus on the Sign Language Proficiency
Interview, level three on the American Sign Language
Proficiency Interview, or score of intermediate Mid-3.

b. If the language other than English is not able to
be assessed by a standardized examination, one of the
following criteria shall be met:

1. The school district shall certify to the State
Superintendent of Education that a school district language
examination meets the rigor at the intermediate-mid level of
language proficiency according to the guidelines of the American Council of Teachers of Foreign Languages. To that end, the assessment of a language other than English shall assess listening, speaking, reading, and writing at a level of intermediate-mid proficiency or higher. The assessment should be similar to the American Council of Teachers of Foreign Languages Oral Proficiency Interview Writing Proficiency Test and should require collaboration with community members who are native speakers or near native speakers in that language. This assessment should be similar to the process used in other states for assessing proficiency in tribal languages.

2. Notwithstanding subparagraph 1., a student who seeks to qualify for the State Seal of Biliteracy through a language that is not characterized by listening, speaking, reading, and writing, or for which there is no written system, shall pass an assessment on the modalities that characterize communication in that language at the corresponding intermediate proficient level or higher.

c. If neither paragraph a. nor paragraph b. are able to be implemented, or if new language assessments become available, one of the following approaches may be followed:

1. The State Superintendent of Education may provide a listing of equivalent language assessments that school districts may use.

2. A school district may provide the State Superintendent of Education with a list of equivalent language assessments that the school district proposes to use in place
of those listed in this section. The State Superintendent of
Education may use lists received from school districts in
developing a state list of equivalent language assessments.

Section 3. The State Department of Education shall
do both of the following:

(1) Prepare and deliver to participating school
districts an appropriate insignia to be affixed to the diploma
or transcript of the student indicating that the student has
been awarded a State Seal of Biliteracy by the State
Department of Education.

(2) Provide other information the department deems
necessary for school districts to successfully participate in
the program.

Section 4. A school district that participates in
the program under this act shall do both of the following:

(1) Maintain appropriate records in order to
identify students who have earned a State Seal of Biliteracy.

(2) Affix the appropriate insignia to the diploma
and transcript of each student who earns a State Seal of
Biliteracy.

Section 5. It is the intent of the Legislature that
no fee be charged to a student to participate in the State
Seal of Biliteracy pursuant to this act.

Section 6. This act shall become effective on the
first day of the third month following its passage and
approval by the Governor, or its otherwise becoming law.