



February 17, 2021

Re: Seal of Biliteracy and Native and Tribal Languages

Dear Tribal Leaders, Language Leaders, Superintendents, School Administrators, Counselors, Registrars, and Educators:

We are hoping that this letter finds you, your family, communities, and the citizens of your Nations well. We are writing to inform you of the steps to earn the Seal of Biliteracy ([RCW 28A.300.575](#)) and World Language competence-based credits with a Tribal language.

To earn the Seal of Biliteracy, students must present proficiency in English and one or more other languages. English proficiency is documented when a graduating student completes all English Language Arts requirements in accordance with Chapter 252, Laws of 2019. To earn the Seal of Biliteracy by graduation, students must earn 4 World Language competency-based credits, the equivalent of 4 years of high school World Language courses.

For Tribal languages, honoring tribal sovereignty, tribal consultation and government to government relationships between Tribes and districts, each Tribe determines the level of proficiency students need in order to be considered biliterate. Tribes develop the methods and processes for determining proficiency in their respective Tribal languages. Teachers who instruct Tribal languages must be certified through the First Peoples' Language, Culture, and Oral Traditions Certification Program ([WAC 181-78A-700](#)). Affirmation that students have successfully earned the Seal of Biliteracy for Tribal languages follow the agreed processes determined through consultation with each Tribe.

Process for Reporting World Language Competency-based Credits with a Tribal Language

1. Tribe determines the student's proficiency level in the Tribal language and recommends the equivalent credits, e.g., 1-4 years of high school World Language credit. (Four years of competency-based credit are required to earn the Seal of Biliteracy.)
2. Tribe sends a letter of the student's language proficiency and recommended equivalent credits to the high school registrar.
3. District posts earned World Language competency-based credits to the student's transcript through the district's student information system within a month of receiving the proficiency letter and no later than May 31st.
4. The designation of credits earned by Tribal determination of language proficiency is reported in [CEDARS](#) Student Grade History File (H), element H13–Course Designation

Code (page 100), using the Local Competency Test designation (L) code. Each district may set up its own local course title to reflect the fact that the credit is competency-based and not from a seat time course in their school. Below is an example for reporting competency-based course credits required for students to earn the Seal of Biliteracy with a Tribal language.

Example of Tribal Language Competence-based Credit to Earn the Seal of Biliteracy

This student took one year of Klallam 1 and asked the Lower Elwha Tribe to determine their Tribal language proficiency. The Tribe determined the student's proficiency was equivalent to four years of high school Tribal language courses and recommended 4 competency-based credits to earn the Seal of Biliteracy upon graduation. The registrar recorded the following:

Local Course Title: Klallam 2 Competency

State Title: American Indian Language II

State Code: 24903

Local Course Title: Klallam 3 Competency

State Title: American Indian Language III

State Code: 24904

Local Course Title: Klallam 4 Competency

State Title: American Indian Language IV

State Code: 24905

Local Course Title: Klallam 5 Competency

State Title: American Indian Language V

State Code: 24906

Proficiency Level: Tribally determined; equivalent to four years of World Language credit.

Summary description: Student has demonstrated Tribal language proficiency, as determined by the Tribe, equivalent to completing four years of high school Tribal language courses.

Process for Reporting an Earned Seal of Biliteracy with a Tribal Language

To report a student as having earned the Washington State Seal of Biliteracy in [CEDARS](#), you must file in the school year that the student earns the Seal of Biliteracy (i.e., graduates):

- A. Element I06 – Attribute or Program Code: Report valid value 41 - Seal of Biliteracy Earned.
- B. Element I07 – Start Date: Report the date the student earned the Seal of Biliteracy (i.e., graduates).
- C. Element I08 – Exit Date: Report the same date as I07.
- D. Element I09 – Exit Reason Code: Report Valid Value B – Graduated.
- E. Element I10 – Qualification Code: Report the language in which the student earned the Seal of Biliteracy.

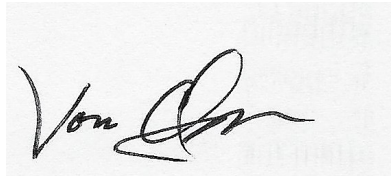
Valid values can be found in the [CEDARS Manual Appendix K - Language Codes](#). If you need further assistance with CEDARS, contact Lisa Ireland at lisa.ireland@k12.wa.us.

Again, thank you for considering this important matter. We look forward to hearing from you. If you have further questions or comments, please contact Veronica Trapani at 360-819-0950 or by email at veronica.trapani@k12.wa.us.

Sincerely,



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