



Guidelines for Implementing the Indiana Certificate of Biliteracy

Senate Enrolled Act No. 267

Code Citation: Section 2 IC 20-30-14.5 State Certificate of Biliteracy

The Indiana Certificate of Multilingual Proficiency is an award made by a participating [school corporation, charter school or accredited nonpublic high school](#) designating on a student's transcript that the student has attained a high level of proficiency, sufficient for meaningful use in college and a career, in one or more languages in addition to English. Multilingual proficiency refers to having a functional level of proficiency in each language; the level of proficiency is not necessarily identical for both languages. The Certificate serves to certify the attainment of proficiency in multiple languages by students for employers and universities. It is a statement of accomplishment that helps to signal evidence of a student's readiness for career and/or college, and for engagement as a global citizen. The focus is on achieving the level of proficiency required for English and the level of proficiency required for one or more other languages.

The Indiana Certificate of Multilingual Proficiency is created to:

- strengthen intergroup relationships, affirm the value of diversity, and honor the multiple cultures and languages of a community
- recognize the value of world language and native language instruction in public schools and encourage students to study a world language
- prepare students with the skills required as a graduate of the 21st century
- certify the attainment of multilingual proficiency
- provide postsecondary educational institutions with an additional method to recognize applicants for admission
- provide state, national and international employers with a method of identifying individuals with language and multilingual proficiency skills

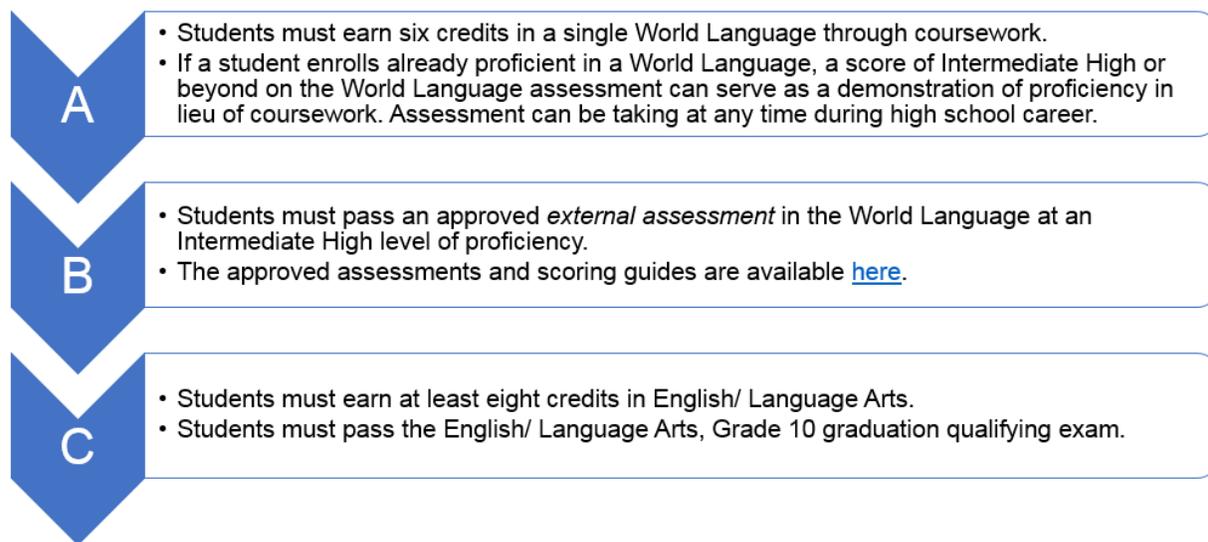
The *Indiana Certificate of Multilingual Proficiency Guidelines* derive from the *National Guidelines for Implementing the Seal of Biliteracy* drafted by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL), the National Association of Bilingual Education (NABE), the National Council of State Supervisors for Languages (NCSSFL), and TESOL International Association.

Qualifying for the Indiana Certificate of Multilingual Proficiency

Indiana has a diverse student population with over 270 languages spoken in the homes of Indiana public school students and a growing number English Learners. Native speaking students of languages other than English are encouraged to maintain and develop their literacy skills in their native or heritage language. Indiana students studying a world language have access to a number

of world language programs that encourage sustained study of a language. Indiana students are encouraged to take advantage of resources and programs to apply their knowledge locally and globally in immersive experiences and service learning projects. All students are encouraged to have a positive view of bilingualism as a personal and professional resource and as a realistic goal. Advanced levels of proficiency in a second language often result in cognitive and linguistic advantages for bilingual speakers.

ALL students are eligible to attain the Certificate of Multilingual Proficiency based on evidence of achieving the designated level of language proficiency in English plus one or more other languages at an **Intermediate High** level during their high school years.



* *IF* a student passes it at the approved level, this assessment may be used as a demonstration of proficiency.

Per Indiana Code, the State Board of Education shall establish the criteria for earning a certificate, including:

- the number of credits a student must earn in English/Language Arts and in a language other than English
 - 8 [credits](#) in English/Language Arts
 - 6 [credits](#) in World Languages

Students who enroll in school already proficient in a world language can earn [credits](#) in the world language through demonstration of proficiency in End of Course examinations aligned with [Indiana Academic Standards for World Languages](#) and other assessments of language proficiency as identified by Indiana Department of Education.

To earn the Certificate of Multilingual Proficiency, Indiana high school students must also pass:

- Assessments of world language and English proficiency the State Board of Education considers necessary
 - The ISTEP+ English 10 Graduation Exam

- A measurement of the Indiana Academic Standards in English/Language Arts
- State approved assessment of a student’s proficiency in one or more additional languages other than English be that a native language, heritage language or a language learned in school or another setting, and be they:
 - modern languages
 - Latin
 - American Sign Language
 - native languages

For a list of approved assessments that can be utilized to measure students’ proficiency that lists rating equivalencies as they equate to **Intermediate High**, click [here](#). For a language-specific, searchable table of the approved assessments which includes testing windows, testing timetables, cost and assessment provider websites, click [here](#).

Level of Language Proficiency Required

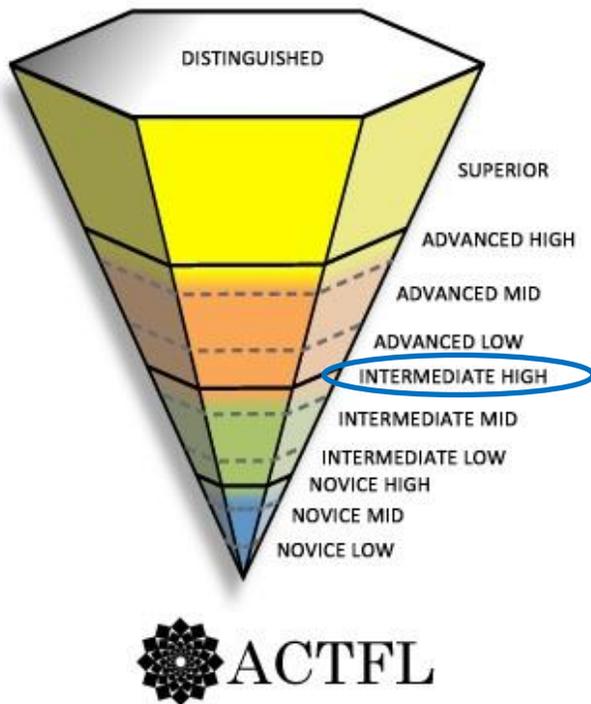
English:

All students must complete at least 8 credits in English/Language Arts and pass the ISTEP+ English 10 Graduation Exam.

Other Languages

In addition to coursework, students will demonstrate proficiency in the language other than English by demonstrating proficiency on a state approved assessment. The minimum target level of an **Intermediate High** level of proficiency on approved assessments is based on the [ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines](#) and the [NCSSEFL-ACTFL Can-Do Statements](#) for each proficiency and mode of communication. Students should demonstrate proficiency in the modes of communication appropriate for that language and in both social and academic use of the language. Students shall demonstrate proficiency on a validated test of proficiency in the language other than English and the district shall submit justification to the Indiana Department of Education as well as maintain a record of students’ completion of all requirements in their permanent record maintained locally.

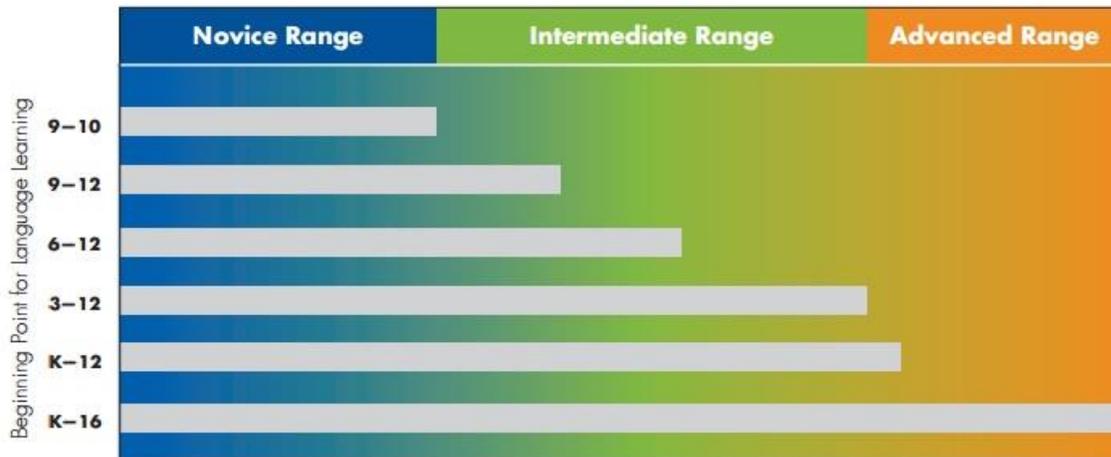
It is highly recommended that any/all world language teachers with students working toward the Certificate of Multilingual Proficiency become familiar with the [ACTFL Performance Descriptors](#) to ensure that they are well-versed in the three modes of communication and the proficiency levels to assist students in moving along the proficiency continuum. Similarly, for teachers of English Learner students, it is also important that they work with students as they prepare to take external assessments to ensure the students understand what domains of language will be measured and what skills will be required of them.



“The ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines are descriptions of what individuals can do with language in terms of speaking, writing, listening, and reading in real-world situations in a spontaneous and non-rehearsed context. For each skill, these guidelines identify five major levels of proficiency: Distinguished, Superior, Advanced, Intermediate, and Novice. The major levels Advanced, Intermediate, and Novice are subdivided into High, Mid, and Low sublevels. The levels of the ACTFL Guidelines describe the continuum of proficiency from that of the highly articulate, well-educated language user to a level of little or no functional ability.”

*Adapted from [ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines](#) published in 2012

Time as a critical component for developing language performance



As the Certificate of Multilingual Proficiency serves as a certification of a targeted level of proficiency, it is important that teachers, students and community members understand what language functions and potential workplace scenarios are representative of the various levels of language ability. Based on the two graphics above provided by ACTFL, an **Intermediate High** level of proficiency indicates a student is able to sustain basic conversations on a variety of topics with functional abilities however, the student may not yet be able to navigate complex topics with highly specific vocabulary or maneuver effectively with complexities in conversation. The table on the following page, helps one see the advantages and levels required for various workplace environments.

ORAL PROFICIENCY LEVELS IN THE WORKPLACE

ACTFL Level	ILR	Language Functions	Corresponding Professions/Positions*	Examples of Who Is Likely to Function at This Level
Distinguished	5	<i>Ability to tailor language to specific audience, persuade, negotiate. Deal with nuance and subtlety.</i>	Foreign Service: Diplomat, Contract Negotiator, International Specialist, Intelligence Specialist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highly articulate, professionally specialized native speakers Language learners with extended (17 years) and current professional and/or educational experience in the target culture
	4			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Well-educated native speakers Educated language learners with extended professional and/or educational experience in the target language environment
Superior	3	<i>Discuss topics extensively, support opinions, hypothesize. Deal with linguistically unfamiliar situations.</i>	University Language Professor, Financial Services Marketing Consultant, Foreign Area Officer, Lawyer, Judge, Court Interpreter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Language learners with graduate degrees in language or a related area and extended educational experience in target environment
Advanced High	2+	<i>Narrate and describe in past, present, and future. Deal effectively with an unanticipated complication.</i>	Physician, Human Resources Communications Consultant, Financial Services Senior Consultant, Quality Assurance Specialist, Marketing Manager, Financial Advisor, Broker, Military Linguist, Translation Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heritage speakers, informal learners, non-academic learners who have significant contact with language Undergraduate majors with year-long study in the target language culture
Advanced Mid			Banking and Investment Services Customer Service Representative, Fraud Specialist, Account Executive, Medical Interpreter, Patient Advocate, Court Stenographer, Court Interpreter, Human Resources Benefits Specialist, Technical Service Agent, Collections Representative, Estimating Coordinator	
Advanced Low			K-12 Language Teacher, Nurse, Social Worker, Claims Processor, Police Officer, Maintenance Administrator, Billing Clerk, Legal Secretary, Legal Receptionist, 911 Dispatcher, Consumer Products Customer Services Representative, Retail Services Personnel	
Intermediate High	1+	<i>Create with language, initiate, maintain, and bring to a close simple conversations by asking and responding to simple questions.</i>	Fire Fighter, Utilities Installer, Auto Inspector, Aviation Personnel, Missionary, Tour Guide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Language learners following 6-8 year sequences of study (e.g., AP) or 4-6 semester college sequences
Intermediate Mid			Cashier, Sales Clerk (highly predictable contexts), Receptionist	
Intermediate Low				
Novice High	0+	<i>Communicate minimally with formulaic and rote utterances, lists, and phrases.</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Language learners following content-based language program in Grades K-6
Novice Mid	0			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Language learners following 2 years of high school language study
Novice Low				

*The levels of proficiency associated with each of the positions above are minimal levels of oral proficiency based on task analyses. The minimal levels were determined by subject matter experts from companies and agencies who use ACTFL proficiency tests.



Equitable Access

The State Board of Education shall direct the Department to prepare and deliver to participating school corporations, charter schools, and accredited nonpublic high schools an appropriate mechanism for awarding the certificate and designating on a student's transcript that the student has been awarded a certificate. All schools and school districts shall receive information on the Indiana Certificate of Multilingual Proficiency. For schools and districts that choose to offer the Certificate of Multilingual Proficiency, students should receive information upon entering middle and high school so that they are able to organize their schedules and meet the requirements to receive this honor. If allowable per the individual assessment guidelines, students with assessment accommodations indicated in their Individual Education Plan (IEP), Individual Learning Plan (ILP) or Section 504 Plan such as those already in place for state-required assessments of language, should be included for assessments used to qualify for the Indiana Certificate of Multilingual Proficiency.

Awarding the Indiana Certificate of Multilingual Proficiency

Participating schools and school districts shall record the names and identifications of students who have earned the Indiana Certificate of Multilingual Proficiency through an individual data

report submission. The Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) will provide participating schools with the Indiana Certificate of Multilingual Proficiency template which includes the State of Indiana seal, and instructions on ordering the accompanying national seal medallion, provided at no cost by [Velazquez Press](#). The students' transcripts shall contain the notation that the student has earned the Indiana Certificate of Multilingual Proficiency.

Frequently Asked Questions:

Can a student take the world language assessment more than once?

Yes, much like many other assessments, it is allowable for a student to take an eligible world language assessment more than one time in their high school career to show proficiency in the world language. Some exams may only be offered one time per year and others may be offered more than one time per year. School officials and corporation test coordinators should determine a local schedule for students based on the language assessments desired by their student population.

How are the world language assessments funded?

As an optional program, Indiana schools are encouraged to utilize the same or similar systems to what they have in place for other examinations in their school. Ultimately, the cost of the assessment may be incurred by the student.

What funding streams can fund the world language assessments for students?

Local sources of funding are encouraged to support students who are unable to afford the cost of an assessment.

Is there a “testing window” for the world language assessments?

The official “testing window” is flexible for schools to allow for the proctoring of a number of different assessments. Schools may choose to test students in late winter or early spring in order to have results prior to award ceremonies and/or graduation whereas other schools may elect to employ current exam schedules that will not provide scores until mid-summer. Both systems are acceptable and should be determined by the local school community.

What does a school do if there is no assessment listed for the world language for which my student is proficient?

At the present time, there is not a portfolio or alternate assessment system in place for languages not covered by the approved list of exams. Should a school have a language that they would like to have considered for addition to the approved list above, please contact the Indiana Department of Education to learn more about the exam review process.

Can a student take the world language assessment at any point during their high school career?

Yes. It is up to individual school corporations to determine guidelines for carrying out the process locally regarding which assessments will be utilized, when they are offered and to what grade levels. Students are eligible for the Certificate once they reach the ninth grade, but may elect to take the exam at any point prior to graduation during the high school sequence according to the local guidelines for scheduling.

How is the certificate presented to students?

This is a local decision based upon the type of honor schools would like to bestow upon eligible students. This may take place at a senior awards program, at graduation, at a whole school assembly or by mailing the certificate to the student after graduation. Schools should determine their own system for honoring their students for this accomplishment.

Are the medallions and seals required?

No. The medallions and the diploma seals utilizing the national label “Seal of Biliteracy” are optional and can be ordered from Velazquez Press by clicking on [this link](#). Local school corporations may choose to utilize a local designation on top of the required certificate and transcript designation from Indiana Code Section 2 IC 20-30-14.5, but the medallions and seals are purely optional.

How will the school gain access to the certificate to present to students?

Once a list of schools participating each year has been determined, an appropriate system will be established to ensure that schools who are choosing to honor their students and provide relevant data to IDOE will receive the digital certificate to personalize for their students.

Is there a waiver process to earn the certificate if a student does not pass the assessment in one of the languages?

Not at this time.

Is there a waiver process to earn the certificate if a student does not earn 8 credits in English Language Arts because they arrived to a United States school after the 9th grade year?

Not at this time.

May the Certificate of Multilingual Proficiency be awarded to students who have already graduated or be awarded retroactively?

As this is an optional recognition opportunity for students through their individual school corporations, this program only becomes effective during the year that the school chooses to begin participating and will not be retroactive for students who graduated in previous years.

Who is responsible for determining if this program becomes an option in our school?

High school administrators, counselors and/or district level administrators are the individuals responsible for determining if this opportunity will exist in each local district. Two points of contact per district will be required for each entity that chooses to participate.