

A Guide for High Schools to Implement The New York State Seal of Biliteracy

A Collaboration Between:

Hunter College Chinese Flagship and
Hunter Manhattan Science High School

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Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION.....	4
GETTING STARTED	7
Earning the NYS Seal of Biliteracy	8
Checkpoint C World Language Assessments and Minimum Scores	9
NYSSB APPLICATION PROCESS.....	10
Establish a School-Based Committee and Its Responsibilities	10
Designate a NYSSB Point Person with Dept. of English Language Learners and Student Support	10
STEPS TO RECRUIT POTENTIAL NYSSB STUDENTS	12
Tips for Identifying Students.....	12
Potential Seal Application Process	13
Avant STAMP Assessment	13
Conduct Proficiency Assessment Before the End of Fall Semester.....	14
Create a Google Sheet to Track Students' Progress	14
Schedule Capstone Biliteracy Project in STARS Classroom	15
Use Initial Proficiency Results to Inform Language Instruction Assistance for Students	15
Provide Language Instruction before Students Retake Proficiency Assessment.....	16
Intermediate-High Speaking Level Description.....	17
Recommendations for Teachers to Increase STAMP Speaking Scores	17
Tips for Students to Improve Speaking Scores	17
Intermediate-High Level Writing Description	18
Tips for Students to Improve Writing Scores.....	18
Tips for Teachers Preparing Students to Improve Speaking and Writing Scores	19
Feedback from Students Who Retested	20

Table of Contents (cont)

CAPSTONE BILITERACY PROJECT.....	22
Part I – The Personal Narrative	22
Part II – Research Component	24
Part III – On-demand Writing Response	26
Part IV – CBP Assessment Panel.....	27
Student Feedback	28
SUBMITTING DATA TO ALBANY AND STARS	30
PROJECT OUTCOMES	32
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.....	33
ENDNOTE.....	35
APPENDICES	37
Timeline of the Major NYSSB Activities in 2019-2020	37
Project Team Members	38
Funder Information	40

INTRODUCTION

This guide was prepared by the [Hunter College Chinese Flagship Linkage Project Team](#) for a project funded by [The Language Flagship](#) from 2019 to 2020.

The mission of The Language Flagship is to provide the highest quality language and culture instruction to American college students so that they may reach professional levels of language proficiency (specified as Superior level proficiency based on the ACTFL proficiency scale) to enhance cross-cultural understanding, cultivate engagement in the global economy, and promote world peace.

Hunter College Chinese Flagship was established in 2011. Over the past decade, Hunter Flagship has helped students from diverse backgrounds and with a wide variety of career aspirations achieve their goals of becoming global professionals.

The Language Flagship also challenges and encourages Flagship programs to find ways to promote the proven Flagship approach at other educational institutions, such as high schools and community colleges. Flagship programs are encouraged to collaborate with these institutions, with the belief that introducing the Flagship approach earlier will help more students reach superior level proficiency before they graduate, and will allow these students to enter the workforce with bilingual and biliterate skills in their chosen language.

The New York State Seal of Biliteracy (NYSSB) was established in 2012. The goal is to recognize high school students with high proficiency in at least one language other than English. Proficiency is demonstrated through course performance, research projects, presentations, and proficiency scores. A Seal of Biliteracy is awarded to students who meet the criteria for New York State Seal of Biliteracy.

New York City has a large number of world language speakers. The students in these bi- and multilingual households often speak a heritage language at home while using English at school. New York City, therefore, is an ideal place to implement the NYSSB project, yet the number of City high schools that have adopted the NYSSB is small. The Language Flagship recognizes the assets that home language skills and cultural knowledge have for language-learning high school students. NYSSB shows that students who have a heritage language background in particular can continue to be successful language learners at the undergraduate level. In fact, having NYSSB status may motivate these students to enter a college that teaches their heritage language, and close collaborations between the language departments of high schools and colleges and universities would further cultivate the language skills of these heritage

students. NYSSB students who wish to achieve superior-level proficiency and become bilingual and biliterate global professionals are more likely to be interested in attending a university with a Flagship program.

Hunter College Chinese Flagship won a two-year Flagship Linkage grant to create a link between college and high school language programs. One of the proposed project goals was to lay out a plan to implement the NYSSB with a high school in New York City. The chosen high school partner was [Manhattan Hunter Science High School \(MHSHS\)](#): a school where 40% of students speak a language other than English at home, including Mandarin Chinese, Cantonese, and Spanish.

This guide documents how the Hunter College Chinese Flagship worked with the project partner MHSHS, which applied for the NYSSB for the first time in spring 2019. It outlines how the project recruited students and assisted them in completing their requirements to enable students to receive the Seal in May 2020. As a pioneer project, the heritage languages selected were Mandarin Chinese and Spanish. The content of this guide focuses on providing step-by-step guidance, detailing the activities that took place for each stage of the project. In addition, specific recommendations and lessons learned, as well as sample materials, are provided. The guide features feedback from students and teachers, including the teacher who served as our project Point Person at MHSHS.

The main conclusion of the project is that high school students with the potential to obtain NYSSB need clear and consistent guidance and support along the way, and when they have that, they can meet the requirements and earn the Seal. The types of guidance and support needed include tips for taking proficiency tests, understanding proficiency scales, information on how to locate target language resources, and how to give a presentation in a target language. For students who need a bit more help to achieve the required proficiency benchmarks, the ability of the teachers to provide instruction to the targeted proficiency level is essential. In the case of Mandarin Chinese, students need additional help in developing speaking and literacy skills because Chinese is a tonal language that uses characters and has grammatical structures that are quite different from English.

For this pioneer project, it was decided that students who are heritage language speakers would be recruited. Originally, 20 students applied for and began the Spanish NYSSB process, and 6 students applied for and began the Mandarin Chinese NYSSB process. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many students stopped the process before it was complete. At the conclusion of the project, 6 Spanish students and 2 Mandarin students successfully completed the requirements and earned the NYSSB. Even though the process took a full-year from beginning to the end, all the participants stated that it was manageable and doable. They emphasized that the benefits they gained from this project were invaluable and beyond their expectations. All participants were high school seniors and planning to soon attend college, and they reported that the NYSSB experience was one of the most memorable of their high school studies. Many felt that this project helped them to become closer to their cultural heritage as well, making it dear to their hearts, and said the project would have a lifelong impact on them.

The project team was very satisfied by the outcome of this project and was gratified by its success. The purpose of writing this guide is to share our experiences with principals and teachers who may not know much about the NYSSB. It is the project team's hope

that the information and experience shared here will help those who are unsure about whether or not to pursue the Seal, and smooth the way for those who are currently navigating the process. Ultimately, we hope this Guide will help NYSSB applicants know what to expect and how to plan for it.

The project team would like to thank The Language Flagship for the grant and their support for the project. The team would also like to thank Dr. Kevin Froner, the Principal of Manhattan Hunter Science High School. Without his support and vision, this collaboration would not have been possible. Several people assisted us during the process, including Dr. Ron Woo, the Director of New York University's Regional Bilingual Education – Resource Networks (RBE-RN), who led an informative workshop on NYSSB for the project team members and New York City teachers. Our gratitude goes to Dr. Ron Woo and to Flagship consultant Dr. Deborah Robinson, both of whom provided advice for the Linkage project, reviewed the first draft of the guide, and provided many valuable comments. Last but not least, our thanks and congratulations to the project's students for their commitment in embracing and celebrating their bilingual and bicultural heritage.

Our best wishes to all who join NYSSB,

Der-lin Chao and the Project Team
July 15, 2020

Flagship Linkage Project Team:

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GETTING STARTED

According to the New York City Department of Education's Division of Multilingual Learners (DML), the Seal of Biliteracy is a way to recognize high school graduates who have attained a high level of proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing in one or more languages in addition to English. The rationale is that students who are literate in multiple languages should be recognized as having a well-rounded education and highly marketable skills.

The goals of the Seal of Biliteracy are to encourage the study of languages, recognize the value of foreign and native language instruction in schools, affirm the value of diversity in a multilingual society, identify high school graduates with language and biliteracy skills for employers, provide universities with additional information about applicants seeking admission, and prepare students to meet 21st century challenges in a globalized environment.

The first step for high school teachers and administrators is to understand exactly what the New York State Seal of Biliteracy (NYSSB) is and what criteria are required for students to obtain the Seal. The New York State Department of Education has published a [Handbook](#) for NYSSB. The following two charts summarize the requirements.

Earning the New York State Seal of Biliteracy

A. Students wishing to receive the New York State (NYS) Seal of Biliteracy must complete all requirements for graduating with a NYS Regents diploma*; and

B. In addition to the above minimum requirement, students wishing to receive a NYS Seal of Biliteracy must earn **three (3) points** in each of the **two (2) areas** listed below:

Criteria for Demonstrating Proficiency in English	Point Value	Criteria for Demonstrating Proficiency in a World Language	Point Value
Score 75 or higher on the NYS Comprehensive English Regents Examination or score 80, or higher on the NYS Regents Examination in English Language Arts (Common Core)* or English Language Learners (ELLs) score 75 or above on two Regents exams other than English, without translation.	1	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, for both the coursework <u>and</u> final examination consistent with Checkpoint C standards.	1
ELLs score at the Commanding level on two modalities on the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESLAT).	1	Provide transcripts from a school in a foreign country 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
Complete all 11 th and 12 th 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	For students enrolled in a bilingual education program, complete all required Home Language Arts (HLA) coursework and the district HLA exam with an 85 or higher, or a comparable score using another scoring system set by the district and approved by the Commissioner.	1
Achieve the following scores on the examinations listed below: -3 or higher on an Advanced Placement (AP) English Language or English Literature examination, or -80 or higher on the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL).	1	Score at a proficient level on an accredited Checkpoint C World Language assessment (See “Checkpoint C World Language Assessments and Minimum Scores” on the following page.)	1
Present a culminating project, scholarly essay or portfolio that meets the criteria for speaking, listening, reading, and writing established by the district’s Seal of Biliteracy Committee to a panel of reviewers with proficiency in English.	2	Present a culminating project, scholarly essay, or portfolio that meets the criteria for speaking, listening, reading, and writing established by the district’s 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 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.**

Checkpoint C World Language Assessments and Minimum Scores

(based on ACTFL Intermediate High standards)

Completing one or one group of these examinations will yield one point towards the three total points necessary on the criteria point system for demonstrating world language proficiency.

ASSESSMENT	MIN SCORE
AP – Advanced Placement Examination Chinese, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Latin, Spanish, Spanish Literature	4
IB - International Baccalaureate Albanian, Amharic, Arabic, Azerbaijani, Bengali, Bosnian, Bulgarian, Catalan, Chinese, Croatian, Czech, Danish , Dutch, English, Estonian, Finnish, French, German, Modern Greek, Hebrew, Hindi, Hungarian, Icelandic, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese, Khmer, Korean, Lao, Latvian, Lithuanian, Macedonian, Malay, Nepali, Norwegian, Norwegian (Nynorsk), Persian, Portuguese, Russian, Serbian, Slovak, Slovenian, Sotho, Spanish, Swahili, Swedish, Thai , Turkish, Urdu, Vietnamese	Standard level -5 Upper level - 4
STAMP4S - Standard Based Measurement of Proficiency Arabic, Chinese (Traditional and Simplified), English, French, Hebrew, Japanese, Spanish, German, and Italian	6
DELE (Diplomas of Spanish as a Foreign Language) – through Cervantes Institute NYC	B1
AAPPL -The ACTFL Assessment of Performance toward Proficiency in Languages Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, and ESL. New in 2018: Hindi, Italian, Japanese and Thai.	I-5
OPI – The ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview Afrikaans, Akan-Twi, Albanian, Amharic, Arabic, Armenian, Azerbaijani, Baluchi, Bengali, Bosnian, Bulgarian, Burmese, Cambodian, Cantonese, Cebuano, Czech, Dari, Dutch, English, French, Ga, Georgian, German, Greek (Modern), Gujarati, Haitian, Creole, Hausa, Hebrew, Hiligaynon, Hindi, Hmong-Mong, Hungarian, Igbo, Ilocano, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese, Javanese, Kashmiri, Kazakh, Kikongo-Kongo, Korean, Krio, Kurdish, Lao, Malay, Malayalam, Mandarin, Mandingo-Bambara, Nepali, Norwegian, Pashto, Persian-Farsi, Polish, Portuguese, Punjabi, Romanian, Russian, Serbian/Croatian, Sindhi, Sinhalese, Slovak, Somali, Spanish, Swahili, Tagalog, Tajik, Tamil, Tausug, Telugu, Thai, Tigrinya, Turkish, Turkmen, Uighur, Ukrainian, Urdu, Uzbek, Vietnamese, Wolof, Wu, and Yoruba.	Intermediate High In this section, students should take exams in as many modalities (speaking, listening, reading and writing) as available to qualify for Checkpoint C credit.
OPIc - The ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview by Computer Arabic, English, French, German, Italian*, Korean, Mandarin, Pashto, Persian, Farsi, *Portuguese, Russian and Spanish. (*Limitations apply)	
WPT/BWT – The ACTFL Writing Proficiency Test/Business Writing Test Paper & Pen: Albanian, Arabic, Chinese-Cantonese, Chinese-Mandarin, English, French, German, Greek, Haitian Creole, Hebrew, Hindi, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Persian, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Serbian/Croatian, Spanish, Turkish, Urdu, and Vietnamese -Internet: Arabic, Chinese-Cantonese, Chinese-Mandarin, Danish, English, French, German, Greek, Hindi, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Norwegian, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, Turkish, Vietnamese	
RPT – The ACTFL Reading Proficiency Test English, French, German, Italian, Portuguese, Russian, and Spanish LPT – The ACTFL Listening Proficiency Test English, French, Italian, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, and German.	
ALIRA – The ACTFL Latin Interpretive Reading Assessment	I-4
SLPI: ASL – American Sign Language Proficiency Interview	Intermediate Plus

NOTE: Some exams do not give results until after June, so students/advisors may need to plan accordingly. Other nationally recognized examinations may be used if approved by the district’s NYS Seal of Bilingualism Committee

NYSSB APPLICATION PROCESS

If a high school principal decides their school should become a NYSSB school, the school must submit an application. Please note that updated information for each year's Seal of Biliteracy application can be found in the *Principals' Weekly* every September/October. Schools must first submit their intent to apply, and this must be done by the end of October.

Establish a School-Based Committee and Its Responsibilities

To apply, the school needs to create a School-Based Committee (SBC). This SBC must include, but is not limited to, the following personnel:

- An administrator
- A guidance counselor
- An English Language Arts (ELA) Teacher
- An English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Teacher
- A World Language (LOTE) Teacher

The SBC will carry out all activities related to the timeline for Seal of Biliteracy implementation.

The SBC's responsibilities are as follows:

- Development of a student application process
- Oversight of student advisement at the school level
- Evaluation of students at the school
- Administration of the Capstone Biliteracy Project (CBP) assessment
- Presentation of the Seal of Biliteracy awards

Designate a NYSSB Point Person with Department of English Language Learners and Student Support

In addition, each school must designate a NYSSB Point Person who will serve as the point of contact with the New York City Department of English Language Learners and Student Support (DELLSS). This Point Person will do the following:

- Act as a liaison between DELLSS and the SBC
- Continually inform the students of each task to complete
- Monitor students' overall progress

Based on the experience of this project, the role of this Point Person is crucial and can determine the students' success or failure. A school must choose someone who is responsible and organized.

Organization is key because there are numerous deadlines set by DELLSS, and students move through the process at different speeds. The Point Person must also coordinate with the language tutors so that the students can be scheduled for the STAMP exam (to establish language proficiency) when they are ready.

STEPS TO RECRUIT POTENTIAL NYSSB STUDENTS

The first step in creating a NYSSB program is identifying students who have the potential to acquire the Seal. The school has to determine which languages can be supported in this program. It is the school's decision to determine what language(s) to focus on each year. (After a preliminary evaluation of potential students, this project chose to focus on two languages, Spanish and Mandarin.)

Tips for Identifying Students

It is recommended that students receive their Seals in their senior year; therefore, it is best to identify them at the end of their junior year.

How do you find students with heritage language skills? In New York City, a guidance counselor or assistant principal can use the school's administrative database system, *Automate the Schools (ATS)*, to run a RPOB (Report – Place of Birth) for every student in the school. This report lists the home language of every student. Keep in mind that just because a home language other than English is listed, it does not mean that the student is proficient in that language. One reason for this is that after a decade or more in an English-language school system, even students who initially spoke a different language at home may now feel most comfortable speaking English at home. Furthermore, many students may be proficient or even fluent in listening and speaking another language, yet not be able to read or write a single phrase in that language.

Finally, since the Seal of Biliteracy requires that a student be able to listen, speak, read and write at an intermediate high level, it is possible that students who complete a long sequence in a foreign language may be proficient enough to earn the Seal while never speaking that language at home (whether it was their first language or not.)

Assess Students' Language Skills Before They Apply

Another way to recruit students is to ask the school's world language teachers to recommend candidates. These teachers can also help the Point Person interview the potential students (also known as Seals) to evaluate their levels of interpersonal and academic fluency.

If a world language teacher is not available, the Point Person (if they themselves do not speak the language) can ask students themselves if they believe they are able to listen, speak, read and write at an intermediate high level. The Point Person can have

them read a textbook at the intermediate high level and ask them if they understand it. However, it's best if there is a staff member who can informally or formally assess the four modalities.

Those involved in this work can conduct formal assessments using proficiency tests. It is imperative that the students be within reach of the intermediate high level or they will not be strong candidates.

Potential Seal Application Process

Once potential Seals are identified via informal and/or formal assessments, Program Staff should do two things:

- First, explain the Seal program to these students in great detail, and assess their interest in pursuing the Seal over the following year.
- Second, send a letter to their parents/guardians in their home language. You may have to use the Department of Education's translation and interpretation unit (translations@schools.nyc.gov) for this if no one on staff can do it. You may also use the NYC DOE translation services line (1-800-889-5921) to connect with an interpreter to speak to the parents on the telephone.

It is important to highlight the benefits of the Seal: formal recognition for being bilingual, an accomplishment that is appealing to colleges and potential employers, special recognition at graduation, etc.

- A sample letter to parents in English can be found [here](#).
- A sample letter to parents in Chinese can be found [here](#).
- A sample letter to parents in Spanish can be found [here](#).

When students and their parents/guardians express their consent, the Point Person will then create an [application](#) for students interested in pursuing the Seal.

The Point Person must list every step of the process so students will understand that they are making an eight-month commitment (October to May). Both students and parents/guardians must sign the application.

Avant STAMP Assessment

The Avant STAMP Assessment test is computer-based, so students should have access to a computer lab with headsets and a stable internet connection. The test is adaptive, so students who are more proficient will be given more questions and thus require a longer period of time to complete the test. Students will be tested on 4 modalities (reading, writing, speaking, and listening); intermediate-level students often need 2-3 hours to complete the entire test. Students can take breaks or complete the test on two different days. Note: *Remind students to jot down the unique Login Name they create for themselves because they will need to enter the exact same information when they log back in to complete the test.*

Students can take the [Avant STAMP Assessment](#) to fulfill the **Checkpoint C** requirement. The minimum benchmark is level 6 (Intermediate-High) in all four modalities. Sample

tests in different languages can be found [here](#). This is the exam we chose to use at Manhattan Hunter Science High School.

The price of the test depends on how many tests are ordered at one time. In April 2020, the price was \$19.90 per test for an order of 100 tests, and \$24.90 per test for orders of fewer than 100. Check with [Avant Assessment](#) directly for the most updated information.

STAMP is especially suitable for students who did not score higher than a 4 on a world language Advanced Placement exam or did not take the AP exam at all. It is also worth noting that students can take proficiency tests more than once if the first score does not meet the proficiency benchmark. If there is only one modality that a student does not pass, the student can retake the test specifically for that modality.

It takes several weeks to receive the application results. Once the school is designated to be a NYSSB school, there will be various training sessions for teachers and/or organizers. The information will be sent to the Point Person. Workshops offered in 2019 included an information session on October 3 for Manhattan and Queens schools; office hours via Microsoft Teams were held in mid-March 2020 to discuss and answer questions related to entering students into STARS, an application information system, and about Part III or Part IV implementation; and two more sessions were held in early-June 2020 to discuss and answer any questions related to the end-of-year procedure for completing the Seal of Biliteracy process.

Conduct Proficiency Assessment Before the End of Fall Semester

If the Point Person has time before the school year ends, he or she may sign up the potential Seals for their STAMP assessment.

There are three benefits to taking this test early:

- Those who score a 6 or higher on each section will have already fulfilled the **Checkpoint C** requirement.
- For those who don't score a 6 or higher, the test will provide data on which particular area(s) (listening, speaking, reading or writing) students need to focus on the following year.
- The program will learn which students may not have a reasonable chance to attain the Seal, and they can be informed before going further.

Create a Google Sheet to Track Students' Progress

To facilitate organization of data, it is recommended that the Point Person create a spreadsheet to track students' progress. Helpful information to include in the left side of the chart is first and last name, OSIS numbers (student ID #s), and email addresses. Freeze those columns. Then to the right, add the requirements for both the English component and the foreign language component of the Seal, including the **Capstone Biliteracy Project**. Click here for a [Sample Seal Tracker](#).

Schedule Capstone Bilingual Project in STARS Classroom

Once the Point Person has determined the list of Seals, the Capstone Bilingual Project must be scheduled in the application [STARS Classroom](#) and indicated on the student's transcript.

According to the New York State Seal of Bilingual FAQ page, "Schools should schedule a separate, non-credit bearing course with the format 'F_ _ _ QJ.' The course must begin with the character 'F' to indicate it is in the LOTE department, and the second character must indicate the language of study as described in the High School Course Code Directory. (You must have DOE credentials to enter the FAQ site.)

The sixth character should be 'Q' and the seventh character should be 'J'—designating the experience as 'project-based.'

Schools are encouraged to title this experience [Particular Language] Capstone Bilingual Project so that outside parties are aware that their projects relate to bilingual. Here is an example: [NYCDOE SealofBilingual FAQ 2020 vF \(2\) \(1\).pdf](#)

Use Initial Proficiency Results to Inform Language Instruction Assistance for Students

It is recommended that schools arrange the initial assessment as soon as the students are on the potential Seal list. If students pass the test in the first round, they will not have to take the test again and can focus on other components. It is possible that students meet the requirement of one, two or even three modalities but are one or two sub-levels away in one or two modalities.

Our data shows that if a student is only one or two sub-levels away from the required level of 6, with one-hour per week of tutorial language instruction students are able to improve one to two sub-levels to meet the proficiency benchmark within one semester. Given the short amount of time for such marked improvement, it is worthwhile for school principals to find resources to provide some language instruction to these students.

For Hunter's project, 14 Spanish Seal candidates and 5 Chinese Seal candidates completed the initial assessment. Below are their assessment results:

Initial Assessment Results Breakdown: Spanish Group

Spanish N=14	5 (Intermediate - Mid)	6 Minimal Benchmark (Intermediate - High)	7 (Advanced - Low)	8 (Advanced - Mid)	9 (Advanced - High)
Reading		7%		36%	57%
Listening			7%	14%	79%
Speaking	14%	43%	43%		
Writing	7%	64%	29%		

The following points summarize the initial assessment results for the Spanish group:

- Spanish-speaking students had very high starting points.
- The highest proficiency was in listening, followed by reading.
- In listening and reading, all students were able to obtain the minimal benchmark of 6 or above in the first round of assessment.
- Students needed additional practice for the two productive skills: speaking and writing.
- Writing appeared to be the most challenging component for these students.

The chart below shows the initial assessment results for the Chinese group:

Initial Assessment Results Breakdown: Chinese Group

Chinese N=5	Below 6	6 Minimal Benchmark (Intermediate - High)	7 (Advanced - Low)	8 (Advanced - Mid)	9 (Advanced - High)
Reading	20%	40%		40%	
Listening		20%		80%	
Speaking	80%		20%		
Writing	80%	20%			

The following points summarize Chinese student performance:

- Chinese students scored the highest in listening, followed by reading.
- One out of five students met the required level of 6 in all modalities in the first round.
- One student scored 2 (Novice-Mid) in reading
- Speaking and writing were the most challenging components for these students.

Chinese reading skills requires a much longer time to build than the other skills. Therefore, it was decided that the student who scored 2 should not proceed.

Provide Language Instruction Before Students Retake Proficiency Assessment

The project team provided students who did not meet the proficiency benchmarks a chance to retake proficiency tests. Before taking the STAMP proficiency tests the second time, each student was assigned a tutor to receive one hour per week of language instruction focusing on their weaknesses. The retake results indicate that providing language instruction was extremely useful in boosting students' proficiency.

In May 2020, two Spanish-speaking students and one Chinese-speaking student chose to retake the STAMP assessment in order to complete the process and obtain their Seal. One Spanish-speaking student retook the speaking portion and successfully moved from 5 (Intermediate-Mid) to 7 (Advanced-Low). The other Spanish-speaking student retook the writing component, and successfully moved from 5 (Intermediate-Mid) to

6 (Intermediate-High). The Chinese-speaking student retook the speaking and writing components. Her speaking score moved from 5 (Intermediate-Mid) to 7 (Advanced-Low), and her writing score moved from 4 (Intermediate-Low) to 7 (Advanced-Low).

Intermediate-High Speaking Level Description

At this level, learners are able to:

- Create clear, detailed, extended speeches and presentations on a wide range of subjects.
- Create language that shows good control of the language, using a variety of transition and linking words and strategies.
- Show increased grammatical accuracy and vocabulary depth and breadth in language, with natural flow and speed.

Recommendations for Teachers to Increase STAMP Speaking Scores

- Based on our experience, we have four recommendations for teachers to consider:
- In order to help students move up a proficiency speaking level on the STAMP exam, the teacher can use the sample STAMP exam available online at [Sample Tests](#).
- It is helpful for teachers to go over the description of “Intermediate-High” levels with struggling students.
- After students grasp the characteristics of intermediate-high speaking, teachers can have practice conversations with the students to determine exactly what suggestions to offer.
- Google Meet is a good, free platform for offering online tutoring, if meeting in person is not possible.
- Students need to be told frequently that they need to develop their responses as much as possible to provide a large language sample.

Tips for Students to Improve Speaking Scores

Based on our observations of tutor-and-student interaction, the project team provided the following suggestions for students to improve their speaking scores:

- Focus on linking thoughts and ideas together using more complex language and linking strategies.
- Focus on less common vocabulary.
- Slow down!
- Focus on accuracy and organization (clear beginning, middle, and end).
- Read the full task description and create a bulleted list of detailed topics to cover.
- Expand on each topic as much as you can. You want to create as large a language sample as possible while making sure to respond to each of the topics.

Additionally, the STAMP provides students with a [Test-taker Guide](#), which is a useful resource for both students and teachers. By looking at the test-taker guide, the teacher can prepare some sample speaking prompts for students that will push them to the Intermediate-High level. Some sample prompts taken from the Test-taker Guide are listed below:

Prompt 1: Future Plans

- What are your plans for after graduation from high school?
- Will you go to college? What will you study? Where?
- What field of work will you go into? Do you have a specific job in mind?
- What are the work requirements for that field/specific job?

Prompt 2: Contemporary Issues: Technology

- What is the role of technology in our lives today? What role does technology play in your life?
- What are some positive aspects of technology?
- What are some negative consequences of technology?
- What types of technology do you think will exist in the future?

Prompt 3: Contemporary Issues: The Environment

- What are some environmental issues facing your community?
- How do you think people can solve one or more of these issues?
- What will you do to help solve these issues?

Intermediate-High Level Writing Description

Similar to the speaking section, teachers should review the “Intermediate-High” level description with students looking to improve their proficiency. Teachers can then prepare sample writing tasks for students, or use the STAMP practice online test. Students might find it convenient to use Google Docs to submit practice-writing samples to their teachers for comments/feedback.

At Intermediate-High level, learners are able to:

- Write clear, detailed, and developed ideas on a wide range of subjects.
- Create responses that show good control of the language, using a variety of strategies and transitional and linking words.
- Show grammatical accuracy and strong vocabulary.

Tips for Students to Improve Writing Scores

Budget time to answer each question. Students may need to be told that there are several writing tasks on the exam. One student reported that she wrote a very in-depth response for the first prompt before realizing there were a few more. Since she was not expecting to have more tasks to complete, she did not write as much for the subsequent tasks. As with the speaking section, students may need to be reminded to expand on their responses as much as possible to provide a large language sample.

Finally, teachers can also prepare students by giving them a list of transitional words and expressions to improve the clarity and cohesiveness of their writing. Furthermore, teachers should encourage students to read as much as they can, and to discuss what expressions and words they noticed good published writers are using and why.

Tips for Teachers Preparing Students to Improve Speaking and Writing Scores

As mentioned, students are required to take the STAMP exam, and they need to reach the minimum benchmark level 6 (Intermediate-High) in all four modalities: reading, listening, speaking and writing. Students who continued in the project after the initial assessments were the ones who reached level 6 in at least two modalities: reading and listening. Teachers worked with them to improve their speaking and writing skills.

First of all, students need to understand what it means to speak and write at Intermediate-high level. They should increase the length of their responses, and should include a clear introduction, body paragraphs, and a conclusion. When given a topic to argue, in addition to providing a main idea in the introduction, students need to provide at least three arguments in the body paragraphs and use two to three sentences to explain each argument.

Second, students need to provide details in their speech and writing. When describing objects, students should pay attention to details, such as color, shape, scent, etc., and provide follow-up details for every point they make using at least two clauses. Here are several examples in Chinese:

我家的冰箱很大，是厨房里最大的电器，比我爸爸都高得多。

(Translation: My refrigerator is huge, it is the biggest appliance in the kitchen, and it is taller than my father.)

When narrating a past event, students should also provide details, such as
上个星期我的朋友来纽约玩，这是他第一次来纽约，也是我们上大学以后第一次见面。
(Translation: My friend came to find me last week. It was the first time he came to New York City, and it was also the first time we met since we both went to college.)

Third, students need to be able to use sequence words and connecting words to organize their thoughts when given a topic to argue and/or narrating a past event, such as 首先 (first of all), 其次 (next), 然后 (then), 最后 (lastly), 总而言之/总的来说/总之 (in conclusion). Teachers also need to teach students more vocabulary and sentence structures to help them express their ideas accurately and avoid repeating the same structures.

Lastly, students need to proofread their own written work to avoid typos.

To help students reach their proficiency targets in speaking and writing, teachers need to help them develop the habit of using the target language daily. For example, students can watch TV shows in the target language, talk to their friends in the target language, use language apps, etc. Students should talk or write about their experiences in paragraphs each week, with teachers giving prompt feedback. It is also useful for teachers to record students' verbal responses, and give students a chance to listen to their own recordings.

Feedback from Students Who Retested

Below is the feedback of two Spanish students and one Chinese student who took the proficiency tests for the second time. It is worth noting that all of them were able to meet the proficiency benchmarks after the retest. The project team asked students to share their feedback on what they did that worked, as well as suggestions for future students.

Feedback from Spanish Student One

When I first took the speaking portion of the exam for the Seal of Biliteracy my speaking score was a 5. However, I recently retook the speaking portion again and my score ended up being a 7. I think the first time I took it I just felt intimidated and overwhelmed by having to speak aloud while other test takers in the same room were also speaking aloud to record their responses. The second time around, I got to take my exam in a quieter and more comfortable environment, which made me feel a bit more relaxed to record my responses to the prompts. My teacher also helped me improve my score by giving me some new strategies to use. The most useful strategy was to expand on my responses by having a few sentences to say for each line in the prompt. She told me that if I more or less answer who, what, when, where, and how, then my response should be thorough enough. She also reminded me that my choice in vocabulary is important because I want to demonstrate that I can say more than a few basic Spanish terms. My suggestion would be to manage your time and develop well thought-out answers before submitting them.

Feedback from Spanish Student Two

When I first took the writing portion of the exam for the Seal of Biliteracy, my writing score was a 5. I was a little bummed out because I got a 6 in reading and speaking, and a 7 in listening.

I've always had trouble with where to place my accent marks in the writing component, but I tried my best to figure it out. I felt very confident on the reading, listening and speaking sections but the writing I wasn't too sure of. But I was later told that I'd be able to take it again, so I wasn't so stressed out about it. I took those months to practice with my mom. Instead of replying to her texts in English, I'd reply in Spanish. I also did this with my friends. Doing this I was able to practice and eventually get the hang of where each accent mark went. At times, I found myself googling a few words before replying because I didn't know or thought that I didn't know where the accent mark went. I retook the writing section and got a 6. I was beyond happy that I got a 6 because I worked really hard to try to increase my score and it paid off. This test allowed me to push myself in learning how to write in Spanish with the accent marks in the right place.

To the incoming kids, it may seem like, "Oh my goodness! There's a test. I don't want to do it," but it's not bad at all. You know the language. You all know this. Don't doubt yourself. This will allow you to stand out from the bunch. Take this opportunity. Yes, it may seem like a lot of work, but it's not; trust me. I truly enjoyed doing this and I'm thankful that I was able to take this opportunity that will help me when I'm looking for a job down the line.

Feedback from a Chinese Student

When I took the proficiency test for the time, I received a 6 in reading, 8 in listening, 5 in speaking and 4 in writing, so I had to re-take speaking and writing since the minimum passing mark is 6 – Intermediate-High. When I was taking the speaking part for the first time, I often had no idea what to say because I did not know we could make up our stories for the prompt. I had about 3 months of time to prepare for the re-take. I received weekly 1.5 hours of one-on-one tutorial session with a teacher. My teacher gave me really helpful tips on how I could improve the speaking part. She said the more details I include in my story, the better score I will get. My responses need to be at paragraph level, and I should always think of an introductory sentence, then give several detailed supporting points, and finally, I should have a concluding sentence to let others know that I am about to end. I think it is important to know those strategies, and these strategies apply to both the speaking and writing tests. Getting a 6 in writing was more challenging than getting a 6 in speaking. I suggest that students practice how to type Chinese characters and how to type quickly and correctly before the test. Furthermore, having some sample prompts to practice beforehand is also very helpful so you will feel more prepared. Lastly, having conversations in Mandarin and watching Chinese shows helped me a lot, as well.

CAPSTONE BILITERACY PROJECT

After students completed their second proficiency tests, all students who met the proficiency criteria could start working on their Capstone Bilingual Project (CBP). The CPB is also referred to as the “Culminating Project.”

The CBP assesses all four modalities (listening, speaking, reading and writing) and all three communication modes (interpersonal, interpretative, presentational). There are four parts:

- Part I – Personal Narrative: a written essay related to the year's specified theme.
- Part II – Target Language Research: written research within the specified theme conducted entirely in the target language.
- Part III – On-demand Writing Response: an on-demand written response related to the specified theme. The prompt for the piece is not revealed until the students arrive for the assessment.
- Part IV – Presentation: an oral defense/presentation of the overall project to a CBP Assessment Panel.

All students need assistance and support to complete this project. It is recommended that students work with a teacher or a tutor. Please click [here](#) to review the rubric. Each part is described below in more detail with tips that are useful to students.

Part I – The Personal Narrative

The personal narrative section is the first part of the CBP that students must complete. They can begin this as soon as the topic is released by the state. They must write a 500-word narrative that addresses a specific writing prompt with multiple components. Their writing must be at the intermediate-high level according to the [provided rubric](#).

Unlike Part III (the on-demand writing piece), students can receive feedback on their narratives from their tutors and make revisions based on the recommendations and instruction their tutors provide. This is why students should begin this part immediately after they meet the proficiency benchmarks. Tutors' instructions should be targeted to students' needs.

In the section below, Spanish and Chinese teachers provide several recommendations on how to assist students in completing this project.

Recommendations from a Spanish Teacher

The main challenge for students is making sure that they fully complete each aspect of the task while providing sufficient detail. Teachers can ask all students to share their first drafts via Google Docs. This allows the teacher to review the draft, leave comments, and highlight sections that lack detail and/or do not address aspects of the task. Students can then make the specified corrections and elaborations. Using Google Docs allows for an online conversation to take place around the personal narrative piece.

If they do not address one of the prompts, they may need an example to help clarify it. This happened primarily with the last aspect of the task that asks students to describe “what individual actions teens and other young people can take to address the recent change or challenge.” Students may need some examples of youth activism in order to elaborate on this topic. Many of them spoke generally about what adults can do without mention of teens/ young people. Additionally, students may need to be told to do more research in order to fully describe the ways in which community leaders have addressed the change or challenge. Some student responses were vague and did not mention any specific community leaders or actions.

It is important to reference the rubric when making recommendations. Teachers can encourage students to keep the NYSSB rubric alongside them as they work so that they can self-monitor and check that they are meeting all of the requirements. It may be helpful to turn the rubric into an actual checklist for some students.

Some students may struggle with specific grammatical structures in their writing. One resource that is useful for Spanish grammar is www.studyspanish.com. If there is a frequent error in student work, teachers can direct students to review a grammar lesson and practice on this website.

Some students struggle with making smooth transitions between ideas. Teachers can create lists of transitional expressions that help students make their writing more clear and cohesive.

Recommendations from a Chinese Teacher

To help students prepare for this part of the project, students received one hour of 1-1 tutoring each week. The 1-1 tutoring helps students to prepare for the four parts of the SEAL project. During the 1-1 tutoring sessions, students practiced their listening, speaking, reading, and writing abilities in the target language, but because of the students' different language abilities, the tasks would be different for each student. Students should have their first draft ready before going to the tutoring sessions, so teachers can give comments on the first draft.

Based on this year's experience, it is extremely important to know students' real language levels, because sometimes the STAMP exam does not reflect students' true level. It is recommended that teachers quickly evaluate students'

levels through students' self-introduction and normal conversation in the first 1-1 class. Teachers could also go over the first draft of the personal narrative with students; for example, ask the students to read what they wrote and to explain some of their sentences. In addition, it is important to set deadlines for the Capstone Bilingual Project so that students can keep progressing along with the recommended due date listed and also to assign homework each week based on students' progress.

Students might misunderstand the purpose of the personal narratives because they focus on practicing essays in their schools. Teachers should remind the students that the personal narrative should focus on personal experience which is a story from one's life or experiences. Also, some students would write social events that are unrelated to their personal experience just to answer the given prompts of the project. So, the teachers should remind students to write what they are familiar with, and then remind students of the structure of a story, like the "[Story Arc](#)."

Part II – Research Component

The purpose of the research component is to demonstrate students' ability to conduct research in the target language. This part of the CBP builds on Part I. Students must conduct research according to a prompt in the target language. They must write notes in their own words in the target language. Additionally, they must write an annotated bibliography in the target language. Student research must be put into a portfolio (physical or online) and kept on file at the school. Later, students will use the research notes to write the Part III On-demand Writing Piece.

Research Prompts Provided by the Department of Education

The 2019-2020 research prompt was: "Students should engage in research related to a country other than their own that uses the target language and how they have addressed a significant environmental, political, or societal challenge in their community."

Research can include:

- A description of the community, its geography, demographics, cultural features
- The challenge it is facing
- How the challenge is being addressed
- Connections and comparisons to Part I and student's own experience

Recommendations from a Spanish Teacher

A common problem that students have with the research component is not knowing where to go for their research. A few students initially tried researching their topic in English, finding sources in English, and translating their notes into Spanish. Of course, this does not satisfy the requirement of "target language" research. Students also need to be reminded that the same standards for reliable sources in an English or history paper apply to research for this project. When students struggle to find reliable sources in Spanish, they sometimes rely on someone's blog or even Wikipedia. It is strongly recommended that you give them a number of reliable websites to begin their research and check in regularly with them.

The Spanish teacher provided the following web resources for her students.

Lectura y Audio- Recursos 2020

www.prensaescrita.com

www.bbcmundo.com

www.elmundo.es

www.elpais.es

www.nacion.com

https://www.unicef.org/spanish/videoaudio/video_radio.html

<http://es.euronews.com>

www.clarin.com

www.lanacion.com

www.abc.es

www.larazon.es

www.bbcmundo.co

www.rtve.es

www.un.org/radio/es/

<http://cnnespanol.cnn.com/>

www.univision.com

Recommendations from a Chinese Teacher

Part II is Target Language Research. Students were expected to engage in research related to a country other than their own that uses the target language, and to talk about how people in the community have addressed a significant challenge. In the tutoring sessions, teachers should ask students to brainstorm potential keywords that they could use to find articles on the internet in the target language, such as using content-related vocabulary words, "the influence of...," related professional's name, etc. Teachers could demonstrate how to find related articles by entering various keywords in the target language as mentioned above in the browser, and finding the potential online resources. The Chinese version of any news report, such as the New York Times and BBC News, could be a potential site for students to find their resources, because if students do not understand the meaning of the article, they can read the English version as a reference. Teachers and students could also read the important parts of the articles together to help them better understand the resources.

When writing an annotated bibliography after finding the resources in the target language, the summary could be a challenge for students. Some students may just copy and paste sentences from the articles. In this case, teachers can give students some practice on how to summarize articles, such as practicing how to find the main idea of an article, how to paraphrase, etc., so students can use their own words to summarize the resources.

Chinese Web Resources for Students

The Chinese teacher advises future teachers to keep in mind that they will need to select articles suitable for students' proficiency levels:

[百度](#)

[BBC中文 \(简\)](#)

[BBC中文 \(繁\)](#)

[纽约时报中文网 \(简\)](#)

[紐約時報中文網 \(繁\)](#)

[天下雜誌 \(繁\)](#)

[換日線 \(繁\)](#)

[关键评论 \(繁\)](#)

[中央通讯社 \(繁\)](#)

[風傳媒 \(繁\)](#)

[三联周刊 \(简\)](#)

[中外对话 \(简\)](#)

[南方周末 \(简\)](#)

[新京报 \(简\)](#)

[财新 \(简\)](#)

Part III – On-demand Writing Response

In the spring semester (February 2020), the State released the secure writing prompt, which was not to be shared with students until they arrived for the assessment. The on-demand writing prompt is related to the research the students conducted in Part II. Students used their notes and their annotated bibliography from Part II, as well as what they wrote about in Part I, to answer the prompt. Their answers had to be handwritten. (NOTE: Due to Covid-19 in 2020, Part III was typed and submitted online, and it was not graded.) Since it is required that the response be handwritten, students who are working toward a Chinese NYSSB must know how to handwrite characters.

Recommendations from a Chinese Teacher

For Part III, the original assignment was the On-Demand Writing, which required students to write a comprehensive essay using this year's identified theme and thematic essential question. To prepare for the On-demand Writing Response, teachers can encourage the students to write a research paper because it helps students conceptualize their idea and put pieces together. Teachers can ask students to create an outline of the research paper to remind themselves of the points they want to express later. Then they can continue writing the research paper by using the supporting details from their resources and explaining the supporting details in the target language. After students finish writing, the teacher can give them feedback (such as fixing grammar mistakes), and show the student how to restate some vague ideas and replace some colloquial language with formal style language.

The process of writing a research paper helps students internalize the knowledge, practice using the target language, and learn to explain ideas

from different approaches. Some students might have difficulty writing the research paper because they may not know how to express their ideas and they may not know the content-related vocabulary. It is a strong possibility that the students will just use the sentences from the resources without explaining them further. Teachers should teach students how to explain, paraphrase, or rephrase sentences in the target language by asking and answering questions verbally. After the students have enough practice and know how to express their ideas verbally in the target language, they can write their research paper.

Writing Chinese characters is another challenge for the students because the Chinese language uses a logographic writing system. It is completely different from the phonological system. Students need to spend extra time practicing writing the language to memorize it. From the beginning of the tutoring sessions, teachers can ask students to write weekly journals or assign them different questions related to their topics each week to help students practice writing (for example, why their topic is worth people's attention, how people in the two communities deal with the problem they mentioned, or how would you address the issue if you were a governor, etc.) Teachers should also ask students to do mock on-demand writing tests in class, and then give feedback. Finally, ask students to practice writing characters they are not familiar with several times.

Part IV – CBP Assessment Panel

Part IV is when students present their Capstone Project in the target language to a panel. The panel will ask the students questions, which means they must be able to speak extemporaneously on their subject.

When Parts I, II and III have been completed and graded, students must present their research to a panel that must include at least three adult speakers of the target language as well as the ENL teacher. A school administrator and anyone else on the School-based Committee (SBC) are also encouraged to participate on the panel.

During the panel presentation, students introduce their work and then respond to 5 questions asked by the panel members to assess the student's knowledge of the researched topic as well as listening and speaking fluency (interpersonal communication). A form should be prepared for panelists, with five spaces to write the questions they will ask and a place to mark the grade they decide the student has earned. See examples here: [Sample Seal of Bilingual Presentation Grading Form \(Spanish\)](#); [Sample Seal of Bilingual Presentation Grading Form \(Chinese\)](#)

Recommendations from a Chinese Teacher

To prepare students for the oral defense of their overall project to a CBP Assessment Panel, teachers need to help students develop the habit of speaking the target language from the first day of tutoring. Teachers need to speak to students and ask them to respond in the target language. If students make any mistakes when speaking, teachers should correct them promptly and follow by explaining the reason.

When starting preparation for the presentation, students might not know what to present, so teachers should provide an outline for students to help them organize the content and remind students of their achievements throughout the process.

The outline could be:

- greeting
- reason you chose your particular topic
- how you conducted your research
- any difficulties you encountered
- what you learned
- reason why you feel it is meaningful

It is suggested that students write a draft of their presentation. After students finish their draft, teachers should help students improve their language to make the presentation more formal.

To prepare for the panel interview, teachers should design questions based on students' topics, such as why your topic is worthy to discuss, the effects, and your suggestions, and teachers should also use the prompts provided in Part III to help students practice interpersonal communication.

Student Feedback

Student Feedback 1

At first, constructing an entire presentation using Chinese sounded like insanity, but I found a way to start by first planning in English. With the planned-out thoughts organized in English, I was able to start formulating sentences in Chinese, eventually combining them into a rough paragraph which was edited until it sounded like a presentation. In preparation for the oral presentation, I would recommend reciting the presentation in front of a mirror a couple of times to gain confidence and fluidity. Although it may seem like just any other presentation that we are accustomed to doing, it is very important that Seal candidates orally practice the presentation because Chinese words on paper may not sound the same when they are being spoken. The more you practice it, the more confident you will feel when speaking in Chinese and the less broken your presentation will sound. One last tip: read as many articles as you can (in your target language) on your Seal topic because they will really help you out when the panel asks questions regarding your project!

Student Feedback 2

A couple of nights before my oral presentation for the Seal of Biliteracy, I opened up my Language Research, Personal Narrative, and Synthesizing Writing Assignment to take notes. I knew I had to discuss the topics I researched and wrote about, so I pulled out the most important points for each and laid them out in a separate document. After that, I just organized my points in a logical manner so my presentation was organized and flowed well. For example, I decided to discuss the problem in my neighborhood first, then branch out to the problem in my chosen country of Venezuela, and finally highlight how both situations and possible solutions compare. To make myself

feel extra prepared for my presentation date, I read and timed my points a few times each day leading up to it, especially practicing the pronunciation of some Spanish words that I have a little trouble saying. As for the day of my actual presentation, I just had my notes on the side, ready to be referenced when I needed them. I do admit that I was a little nervous, but I reminded myself to slow down, breathe, and remain calm to make my presentation as clear as possible. I would advise future students planning to obtain the Seal to take some precautionary steps of their own to prepare before their presentation. For me it was setting aside some bullet points, but for others it may be creating some flashcards, or other methods. The most important part is just knowing your information and feeling comfortable enough to share it in the target language.

SUBMITTING DATA TO ALBANY AND STARS

After the Point Person has graded the Capstone Biliteracy Projects and determined that each student has earned enough points to earn the Seal of Biliteracy, he or she must complete the *New York State Seal of Biliteracy (NYSSB) Student Data File*.

The Division of Multilingual Learners will email this document to the school's NYSSB Point Person. The Point Person must enter the students' biographical information and indicate each requirement of the Seal that they have successfully completed. It automatically tabulates the students' overall scores. (Reminder: They must have at least 3 points for English and for each world language).

The student data file for the 2019-2020 project was provided in June 2020, so there was a quick turnaround time. The information must be submitted with the *Seal Request Form*, which is a Google Form sent from the Division of Multilingual Learners, so it cannot be shown or linked here.

The Seal Request Form indicates the number of Seals earned and the address to which the Seals will be sent. The Seals are actually stickers that are to be affixed to the students' diplomas. They also include Seal of Biliteracy medals to be worn at graduation.

The last step for the Point Person is to log into [STARS Classroom](#) and enter a "P" for each student earning the Seal of Biliteracy. This will ensure that the Seal will be on the student's permanent transcript.

NYSSB End of Year Student Data File

AutoSave • Excel - nyssb-end-of-year-data-form 2019-20-2020-05-01_0 - Excel

File Home Insert Draw Page Layout Formulas Data Review View Help Search

Clipboard Font Alignment Number Styles Cells Editing Ideas

1 Seal of Biliteracy 2019-2020
 2 Seal Request Data Form Date: 5/30/2020
 3

District:

School	Student ID Number	Gender	Race/Ethnicity	Criteria for English Proficiency (Place X for all that apply)										Criteria for World Language Proficiency (X)				For candidates earning the Seal of Biliteracy																							
				Never ELL	Former/Former ELL	English Regents Exam	ELLs - 2 Regents exams	NYSESLAT	11 th and 12 th grade ELA course	JAP English or TOEFL	Project, Essay or Portfolio	Raw points - English	English Criteria Met?	Primary World Language (other than English) for Seal	Checkpoint C level WL course	Home Language Arts	Foreign Transcript	Checkpoint C World Language assessment	Project, Essay, Portfolio	Raw points - World Language	World Lang Criteria Met?	Seal of Biliteracy criteria met?	2nd World Language (other than English) for the Seal	Checkpoint C level WL course	Home Language Arts	Foreign Transcript	Checkpoint C WL assessment														
03M541		Female	Islander	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	4	Yes	Chinese			X	X	3	Yes	Yes																				
03M541		Female	Islander	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	3	Yes	Chinese			X	X	3	Yes	Yes																				
03M541		Female	or Latino	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	4	Yes	Spanish			X	X	3	Yes	Yes																				
03M541		Female	or Latino	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	3	Yes	Spanish			X	X	3	Yes	Yes																				
03M541		Female	or Latino	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	3	Yes	Spanish			X	X	3	Yes	Yes																				
03M541		Male	or Latino	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	3	Yes	Spanish			X	X	3	Yes	Yes																				
03M541		Female	or Latino	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	3	Yes	Spanish			X	X	3	Yes	Yes																				
03M541		Female	or Latino	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	3	Yes	Spanish			X	X	3	Yes	Yes																				
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Sheet1 Sheet2 Sheet3

PROJECT OUTCOMES

In this section, we report on the pioneer NYSSB program results of Manhattan Hunter Science High School, a collaboration with Hunter College Chinese Flagship during 2019-2020.

Initially, the program recruited 18 students who expressed interest in pursuing the Seal of Biliteracy; however, by May of 2020, eight remained. Some students removed themselves from the program because they wanted to focus on their high school and college classes, and others felt that they didn't have the time to devote to completing Part III and Part IV. One student decided that he didn't want to take the STAMP exam again to earn a score of 6 or higher for each modality.

Fortunately, three of our students took the STAMP test again. In fact, one student took it two more times in order to raise her score. All three students were successful, and thanked and gave credit to their tutors for helping them prepare for and pass the exam.

Most of the project presentations went very well. In fact, more than half of them scored "Advanced Low." However, it became clear to the panel members that next time students should spend more time preparing and practicing prior to the presentation day. Also, if a Seal candidate has an IEP (Individualized Education Plan), special attention must be given to those students to ensure that they are receiving all mandated accommodations.

In the end, eight of the students earned the Seal of Biliteracy. They were recognized in their graduation program books with a symbol next to their name indicating that they had earned the Seal, and they received a medal acknowledging their accomplishment. The actual Seal was affixed to their diplomas.

QUESTION AND ANSWERS

Question 1

Does the Seal of Biliteracy exempt a student from the foreign language requirement for graduation at a SUNY/CUNY school, such as Hunter College?

Yes, Hunter College will exempt a student's foreign language requirement if the student has obtained the Seal. However, currently, there is no statewide policy that an institution must recognize the State Seal of Biliteracy and grant college credit. We certainly hope that with more students obtaining the Seal, a statewide policy in recognizing the value of the Seal can be established.

Question 2

Can the project be completed (at least the oral part) in Cantonese or another dialect? Or does it have to be in Mandarin Chinese?

Yes, Cantonese is approved by the New York State Seal of Biliteracy Committee, but keep in mind that the Avant STAMP assessment does not offer a Cantonese proficiency test. The school also needs a faculty member who speaks the dialect and can serve as the advisor and evaluator for the student.

Question 3

For the on-demand writing part, can students type?

As of spring 2020, students must handwrite the on-demand writing piece. However, due to Covid-19, students were unable to come to the school and do the writing portion, so submitting a typed essay was allowed.

Question 4

I was wondering if for the project, I can write about Puerto Rico since it's technically not a 'country' but still a Spanish speaking region.

Yes, you can!

Question 5

Do students have to prepare a PowerPoint for the Part IV student presentation/oral defense? If not, can they elect to present one anyway?

PPT is not necessary, but students can choose to do so if they would like.

Question 6

Can the annotated bibliography be brought to the Part III on-demand writing assessment?

Yes, students can bring the annotated bibliography and research notes when they take the Part III on-demand writing. In fact, we would advise students to use them when they take the on-demand writing assessment.

Question 7

Can students' best scores for each modality on the STAMP4S be combined, similar to what is done for the SAT?

Yes, we can combine a student's best scores.

ENDNOTE

Written by Greg Andronica, the Point Person for the Hunter project:

I wish I could end this guide with a picture or video of the tears of joy that a student shed when she completed her oral presentation and was told she had earned her Seal of Biliteracy. It wasn't the literal seal she would be getting on her diploma or the medal she would receive. It wasn't just the feeling of accomplishment; she had increased her writing STAMP score from a 4 to a 7 in less than four months, which is a very significant improvement. Instead, it was the pride in reclaiming some of her first language that had been lost over her years of living in the United States. Indeed, many students commented that they enjoyed improving their native or heritage language skills. One particular student even bonded with his father, who is from Spain, over the research he was conducting for his Capstone Biliteracy Project. For me, hearing these stories and sharing in their joy was the most rewarding part of this experience.

It was clear from the training sessions I attended that New York State is aggressively trying to expand the Seal of Biliteracy program. I believe this to be a very noble endeavor. After all, promoting biliteracy, especially in a state as linguistically diverse as New York, makes a lot of sense. However, as with many well-intentioned and eventually successful programs, there are often growing pains, and this program is no different. For 2019 -2020, these growing pains were compounded by the global pandemic that shuttered our schools in the middle of March.

The biggest challenge was the delay in receiving the themes for the Capstone Biliteracy Projects for English and the World language. Without a theme with writing prompts, students could not begin the project. Initially, we were told that the theme would be released in October, which would give students a fair amount of time to complete the whole process by May. Unfortunately, the topics were not released until December, shortly before the early winter break. By that time, some students were no longer interested, as they were deep into their semester and busy applying to colleges. Also, with Regents week in January and late winter break in February, we didn't have much school time before schools closed in March.

Fortunately, the state and the people at the Division of Multilingual Learners (DML) at the Department of Education were aware of this year's challenges, and adapted the requirements to meet them. For example, Part III, the on-demand writing piece, was still included but not graded since it was not

written by hand in person. Instead, students had to type it, submit it, and discuss it during the presentation, but there was no formal grade assigned to it, and they had plenty of time to write it. Jill Schimmel, the Senior Director of World Languages at the DML, was extremely supportive throughout the process. She held in-person training sessions and online Q and A sessions. She was also very accessible by email and responded promptly to any questions or concerns that I had - and I had many!

At the end of panel presentations, I asked each student for feedback. I wanted to know what they thought worked well and how the process could be improved for next year. While I felt as though I was pestering them with reminder emails throughout the year, the students told me that they really appreciated it, and they think I should actually be in contact with students more often throughout the process to keep them from falling behind. They also told me that while they appreciated the detailed written directions I would send them explaining each part of the project they were working on, they really found the video explanations most helpful. In fact, one of the positives of the remote learning experience was that I learned how to use Screencastify, which made it very easy to record my computer screen as I demonstrated how to complete each part of the project. One complaint that was shared in many exit interviews was that they didn't have a student model for each part of the project. In other words, they didn't know what their work should actually look like. I had explained the directions and the grading rubric, but I didn't show them a sample student narrative or annotated bibliography from a prior year because I simply didn't have one. For next year, I now have sample projects to show them in English, Chinese, and Spanish. Finally, a number of students expressed a desire to speak to a student who had completed the project before. I hadn't thought of that and didn't know of anyone who had completed it, anyway. However, a few of this year's students have volunteered to be a resource for any students who have questions about the Seal process next year.

It must be noted that while this guide may be helpful for any school who is beginning a Seal of Biliteracy program at their school for the first time, New York State is constantly implementing new changes to the requirements, and they often miss their expected release dates for each part of the Capstone Biliteracy Project. Therefore, I strongly recommend that you take advantage of any training session that is offered in person (they are usually half-day sessions) or online in the fall.

With current uncertainty regarding the opening of schools in September 2020 and what things will look like when we do return, the process for earning the Seal of Biliteracy as well as the timeline may be very different than it was in 2019-2020.

APPENDICES

A. Timeline of the Major NYSSB Activities In 2019-2020

The following timeline is the one we relied on throughout 2019-2020 up to the time of the interruption caused by the pandemic.

Before 11/8/19

Complete the <https://tinyurl.com/NYSSB2019-20> survey to indicate your intent to participate this year.

Before 11/15/19

Form School-Based Committee; enter the SBC members at the survey here.

By 3/20/20

Program students' CBPs in STARS. See guidance below and FAQ #16.

- *Each student completing 1e English CBP should be programmed in STARS appropriately for "English Capstone Biliteracy Project" with code "EE___QJ" (non-credit-bearing).*
- *Each student completing a 2e World Language CBP should be programmed in STARS appropriately for "[Language] Capstone Biliteracy Project" with code "F_____QJ" (non-credit-bearing).*
- *Schools should schedule dates for virtual Part IV presentations (15 minutes per student) and submit to DML by May 15th following the [Appendix B and C guidance](#) on CBP Assessment Panels and Part IV questions.*

Suggested completion dates for Project:

- **Part I – Personal Narrative** (December 2019 - January 2020)
- **Part II – Target Language Research** (February 2020)
- **Part III – On-demand Writing Response** (March - May 2020)
- **Part IV – Presentation** (March - May 2020)

In 2020, schools were highly encouraged to submit their EOY data by Friday, June 12 in order ensure timely delivery of seals/medals. However, submissions will be accepted through August.

B. Project Team Members

Der-lin Chao

Principal Investigator and Project Director, Professor at Hunter College

Dr. Chao has been Professor and Head of Chinese Program at Hunter College since 1998. She holds a Ph.D. in Applied Linguistics from New York University. In addition to teaching and research, Dr. Chao has extensive experience in managing federally funded projects. She received a U.S. Department of Education Instructional Research Studies grant to develop multimedia Chinese literacy instructional materials in 2001. Dr. Chao directed STARTALK summer student and teacher programs from 2007 to 2019. In 2017 she received STARTALK infrastructure grants to develop curricula and materials and a Guide to promote blended learning, and in 2018, grants to develop a Guide on how to ensure K-16 curricular articulation. Dr. Chao has been the Director of the Chinese Flagship program since 2011 and received Flagship funding to implement projects including the teacher training workshops for Flagship and Project Go teachers (2014), the Flagship K-12 blended learning pilot project (2015 to 2017), the Global Linkage project (2018 to 2020), and the Chinese Flagship Overseas Capstone Program in Taiwan project (2019-2022).

Bing Ying Hu

Assistant Project Director, Lecturer at Hunter College

Ms. Hu has an MA in the Teaching of Chinese degree from Hunter College. She also holds a Grades 7-12 New York State Chinese Teacher Certification. Ms. Hu is a tenured lecturer at Hunter College and has been the curriculum coordinator for the Hunter Chinese Flagship since 2011. In addition to teaching undergraduate courses, she is the instructor for the teaching practicum course in the MA in the Teaching of Chinese program and serves as a field supervisor. Ms. Hu is active in the development and research in K-16 teaching and learning. She was the Assistant Director of the Flagship K-12 Blended Learning Pilot Project (2015-2017) and holds assistant directorship for the Global Linkage Project (2017-2018). In these projects, she focuses on using proficiency-based curriculum and the blended learning (combining face-to-face and online teaching) approach. In addition, she led the professional development workshops to provide one-on-one online instruction to Grades K-16 students.

Ming-Ying Li

Project Associate, Lecturer at Hunter College

Dr. Li has a PhD in Curriculum and Instruction with an emphasis in Language, Culture and Society from Pennsylvania State University. Before coming to Hunter College, she taught Chinese language courses at Pennsylvania State University and University of Colorado Boulder. Dr. Li has taught at Hunter College since 2017. She co-designed and taught an innovative course, Chinese for the Global Workforce, to combine advanced-level language studies with internship opportunities. In addition to teaching, she serves as the outreach coordinator for the Hunter Chinese Flagship program. With her strong research background, Dr. Li has proved invaluable in supervising undergraduate Flagship students' honors theses and MA students' research projects. Her primary research area is teaching and learning Chinese as a heritage language with a focus on literacy development. She collaborated with the National Language Resource Center at CUNY to study writing proficiency outcomes and characteristics of college-level Chinese heritage learners.

Gregory Andronica**Point Person at Manhattan Hunter Science High School**

Gregory Andronica is a NYS certified English as a Second Language teacher in New York City. He holds a Business Administration degree from Towson University and an MA in TESOL, as well as an Advanced Certificate in Administration and Supervision from Hunter College / CUNY. Gregory has been teaching for over 14 years at Manhattan Hunter Science High School and at The Maxine Greene High School for Imaginative Inquiry.

Chenhong (Caroline) Zhu**Chinese teacher, Lecturer at Hunter College**

Chenhong (Caroline) Zhu received her MA in Bilingual/Bicultural Education from Teachers College, Columbia University. She has several years of experience teaching the Chinese language from novice level to advanced level at Hunter College. Her interest is in exploring different methods that help students acquire Chinese naturally, develop Chinese language accuracy and fluency, and expand students' understanding of Chinese culture.

Samantha McKay**Spanish teacher at Manhattan Hunter Science High School**

Samantha McKay is a NYS certified K-12 Spanish teacher. She holds a BA in Spanish from SUNY/Albany and an MA in Adolescent Education in Spanish from Hunter College. Samantha has over a decade of experience teaching in public schools in New York City and Westchester County. She currently teaches at Hendrick Hudson High School in Montrose, New York.

C. Funder Information

The Language Flagship leads the nation in designing, supporting, and implementing a new paradigm for advanced language education. Through an innovative partnership among the federal government, education, and business, The Language Flagship graduates students who will take their place among the next generation of global professionals, commanding a superior level of proficiency in one of many languages critical to U.S. competitiveness and security.

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Thank You!

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