

COMMACK HIGH SCHOOL
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An International Baccalaureate School

Dear Parents,

March 8, 2019

In recognition of the importance of bilingualism, many states, including New York, are beginning to award a Seal of Biliteracy in formal recognition of students who have studied and attained a high proficiency in two or more languages by high school graduation. The intent of a Seal of Biliteracy is to:

- encourage the study of languages,
- identify high school graduates with language and biliteracy skills for employers,
- provide universities with additional information about applicants seeking admission,
- prepare students with twenty-first century skills, and
- affirm the value of diversity in a multilingual and global society.

Students who earn the Seal of Biliteracy will have a seal affixed to their diplomas, which they will receive at graduation. In addition, students who complete the requirements for earning the NYSSB will have the designation listed on their final transcripts upon graduation. Students who qualify for the seal as juniors will have several opportunities to announce their successful candidacy to their colleges of choice, through their applications as well as on their letters of recommendation.

In order to be eligible for the Seal of Biliteracy, students must either **earn an 80 or higher on the NYS ELA Regents exam, or maintain an 85 or higher average in their English class.** Students must also **maintain an 85 or higher average in their World Language course(s).** The full list of requirements can be found online in the [NYS Seal of Biliteracy Handbook](#). You may also access the full Handbook for the New York State Seal of Biliteracy, plus information about the student application, a copy of the interview scoring rubric and the parent letter, on the High School Backpack News page.

If your child is eligible and wishes to pursue the New York State Seal of Biliteracy this year, he/she must complete the following steps, each of which will be guided by the classroom teacher and supported by a World Languages department staff advisor:

- **Complete a student application.** Applications are available online and can be accessed through this link: (<https://tinyurl.com/CHSBiliteracyApp>) or on your World Language teacher's eSchoolView page. They are also available in the World Languages Office. **Applications are due Monday, March 25th.**
- **Present a culminating project in English class** that meets the criteria for reading, writing and research established by the district's Seal of Biliteracy Committee. *Culminating project is already included as part of the advanced course curriculum.*
- **Present a culminating project in World Language class** that meets the criteria for reading, writing and research established by the district's Seal of Biliteracy Committee, and that is aligned with the New York State Checkpoint C Learning Standards. *Culminating project is already included as part of the advanced course curriculum.*
- **Engage in an interactive interview with a Seal of Biliteracy Committee panel,** during which the student must demonstrate his/her understanding of the project topic, the process toward completion, personal feelings about the topic, and other questions the panel feels necessary to measure the student's knowledge of the topic and level of speaking proficiency. *Conversation about the World Language project will take place in the target language, while the English course project will be discussed in English. Students must demonstrate target

language proficiency at an Intermediate High level as stated in the NYS Seal of Biliteracy Handbook. As stated in a previous paragraph, the speaking rubric used to evaluate students is available on the High School Backpack News page. **Interviews will take place during the week of April 15.**

- Attend advisory sessions. Four advisory sessions will be available in April to NYS Seal of Biliteracy candidates of each language, to provide support and guidance to students of Spanish, Italian, French and ASL, who are preparing for the culminating interactive interview described above. Students are strongly encouraged to attend. Advisory sessions are scheduled for **Tuesday, April 2, Thursday, April 4, Wednesday, April 10, and Friday, April 12.**

This is only the third year that the Seal of Biliteracy is formally available to students across the State, and we are amongst the pioneer districts that provide this unique opportunity to our advanced language learners. **We are proud to share that, last year, we awarded the Seal of Biliteracy to 135 seniors, while 119 juniors qualified to earn the designation upon graduation this year, providing they continue to meet the requirements set by the State through June.**

The specific goals of the Seal of Biliteracy are to ensure that participants develop high levels of proficiency in their native language and in their second language, meet Common Core Learning Standards, and perform at or above grade level in academic areas. Students must also demonstrate proficiency on their assessments in their core subjects including English Language Arts, receive proper recognition from their home district based on their demonstrated linguistic skills, and develop as bilingual learners and future contributors to the work force.

We hope your child will decide to pursue this valuable recognition! Please feel free to contact me directly with any questions you may have relative to the NYS Seal of Biliteracy.



Sincerely,

LauraAnne Weiss

LauraAnne Weiss

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Commack Schools

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Commack High School Seal of Biliteracy Committee Members

LauraAnne Weiss- Coordinator of World Languages

Charles Schulz- Coordinator of English

Susan Shapiro- Assistant Principal

Margaret Krone- Lead Teacher, World Languages Dept

Michael Marusevich- Lead Teacher, English Dept

Nicole Kregler- Director of Guidance

Alyson Catinella- Guidance Counselor

Lindsey Adornetto- Teacher of English as a New Language

Katina Price- Teacher of Spanish