FAQs

A work in progress...

Are seniors able to submit the scores they received as juniors in order to earn the Seal?
Yes, as long as they have proof they meet the criteria.

If a student takes a proficiency test in their junior year and doesn't meet the criteria in all of the domains, do they have to retake the entire test their senior year or can they test in the domain(s) that require a higher score?
Yes.

My current juniors are going to take the test this year. Are they able to be awarded the seal their junior year or would they have to wait until their senior year to be awarded?
Can we only send seniors' names to the state on May 1?
The Seal is only awarded upon graduation, so please send only applications for seniors on May 1. Scores need not be from the senior year as long as all requirements, including the English requirements of 4 units of ELA or an ACT score are met.

We also have students who graduate early as juniors meaning and receive their diplomas at the end of their junior year. What is Montana's policy on awarding those juniors the Seal?
As long as the students have met all of the requirements - English and another language - they can be awarded the Seal upon graduation, including early graduation.

What is the policy for the state of Montana pertaining to scores older that two years?
Some schools have chosen to give language proficiency tests more than once during high school in order to track the progression of language skills and encourage growth. We also support pathways to the Seal, which might include proficiency testing as early as middle school. With that in mind, any score within five years of graduation will be accepted, though one would hope that the student and school would make every effort to test the most recent progress in the junior or senior year.

We don't receive AP and IB scores until July, and ELL tests (WIDA) are very slow in returning student scores. Seniors won't receive scores until after they graduate. How this will affect these students?
Please fill out and submit the applications in May and indicate that the students will be taking the AP exam to qualify. When you receive the test scores in July, forward them to me and I'll make sure that those who qualify are awarded the seal. We will have to work with you and your registrar with that last step, but we can do it!

What about home-schooled students that have taken language classes at our school. Can they receive the Montana Seal of Biliteracy?
Only if they graduate from your high school and receive a diploma. If not, the Global Seal of Biliteracy would be the appropriate option.

Who can sign the application as a "school official?"
Ideally, this will be the principal or school counselor. In all cases, it is important that the school administration is aware that you are submitting an application for the Seal of Biliteracy on behalf of your student(s).

Can our students receive college credit in the Montana University System for the Montana Seal of Biliteracy?
This is a work in progress. At this time, Montana universities only award credit for AP, IB, and CLEP tests.

Are the seals that we can request in the spring free? My principal was wondering.
The costs of testing are the responsibility of the school district or student. The Board will provide the seal, certificate, and transcript language at no cost.

Feedback / Comments from schools so far
If you have any suggestions as to how to better send applications via email to the Board, that would be great too for next year as we tweak. The email address doesn't accept large files so I had to split my scans of the applications into two emails and two files. If a school has more than 10 Seal applicants, they will end up sending lots of emails which might increase the likelihood that something is missed.
We will do our best to improve this situation for next year and ask for your patience in this first year!

Ideas for Celebration
Glacier High School used signaturepins.com to create pins for their students for their Seal of Biliteracy celebration. Stephanie uploaded the image on the website and the cost was $263 for 100 pins.