



February 2, 2023

The Honorable Al Muratsuchi
Chair, Assembly Education Committee
1020 N Street, Room 159
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: AB 370 (Addis) Biliteracy Inclusion Act
Position: Co-Sponsor/ Support**

Dear Chair Muratsuchi:

Californians Together and the California Association for Bilingual Education (CABE) are pleased to co-sponsor AB 370 (Addis), which seeks to update the criteria to provide flexibility and options for students to demonstrate their proficiency in English in their attainment of the State Seal of Biliteracy (SSB). The goal of this bill is to provide a menu of rigorous options to demonstrate English proficiency that is comparable to the current options available to demonstrate proficiency in the world language. These changes will ensure that more students have the opportunity to demonstrate English proficiency along with an additional language and attain the State Seal of Biliteracy.

The SSB is marked by a gold seal on the diploma or transcript, effective since January 1, 2012, and recognizes high school graduates who have attained a high level of proficiency in speaking, reading, and writing in one or more languages in addition to English. California was the first state to implement the SSB, and since then, 49 states and Washington, D.C. have followed California's lead and adopted their own version of the SSB. This allows students to show their proficiency in another language, places value on home languages, and creates an opportunity for bilingual students to be proud of their multilingual proficiency.

The updated requirements will allow students to show proficiency in English by their course work over their high school career, the Advanced Placement examination, the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) for English language arts or their score in the Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT). The most critical point with the updated criteria is that students and Local Educational Agencies have options, unlike what they have today. For instance, under the current criteria, a student who is unable to take the CAASPP assessment in 11th grade or has a bad testing day, would be ineligible to receive the SSB.

This bill is a result of direct feedback from the field, lessons from the pandemic and the analysis of trends after reflection of ten years' worth of SSB implementation.

We urge your support for AB 370 when it is heard in the Assembly Education Committee and look forward to working with you to address this critical need for California's bilingual students.

Should you have any questions feel free to reach out to Californians Together Legislative Advocate Cristina Salazar at cristina@californiantogether.org, or CAFE's Legislative Advocate Jennifer Baker at jbaker@m-w-h.org.

Sincerely,



Martha Hernandez
Californians Together, Executive Director



Jan Gustafson Corea
CAFE, Chief Executive Officer