

Torrance Unified School District

2336 Plaza del Amo Torrance, CA 90501

Pathway to Biliteracy Awards

History of Biliteracy Award

Californians Together developed the concept of a Seal of Biliteracy in 2008 and worked throughout the state to help school sites, districts and others adopt and implement the Seal of Biliteracy. Over 197 school districts are currently granting the awards, and increasing numbers of state and national professional organizations and other entities have endorsed the Seal. (from the californianstogether.org)



The creation of the Seal of Biliteracy was motivated by a number of purposes including:

- To encourage students to study world languages
- To certify the attainment of biliteracy skills for employers, and for colleges
- To communicate the value of language diversity
- To prepare students with 21st Century skills that will benefit them in the labor market and the global society
- To strengthen intergroup relationships and honor the multiple cultures and languages in a community.

Since 2012, Torrance Unified School District has joined the celebration of recognizing and honoring the multi-literacy skill of our students by promoting The Seal of Biliteracy and the Pathway Awards.



Who Qualifies? *All 5th and 8th grade students who can demonstrate proficiency in English and another World Language.*

The “TUSD Pathway to Biliteracy” will be awarded to 5th grade and 8th grade students. They must demonstrate proficiency in English and another language, including American Sign Language. This award is given at the end of the school year in the form of a trophy. Please refer to the application for details on the requirement.



Important Dates

The applications and the reading logs are accessible to all students on the website (www.el.tusd.org) under the Biliteracy Award tab. **Submit the application and the reading logs to your child's school office.** The parents and the students will be notified of when the writing assessment will be administered by the school site.

The due date for the applications and the reading logs for the 2021-2022 school year is March 10, 2022.

BILITERACY BENEFITS OUR STUDENTS

Source: The California Campaign for Biliteracy by Californians Together 2014

MASTERING TWO OR MORE LANGUAGES HAS ENORMOUS BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS

People who are able to speak, read and write in two or more languages are able to participate in several different cultural and language worlds. Multilingual proficiency actually strengthens how the brain functions. Bilingualism is associated with more cognitive flexibility and better problem-solving abilities. Children who are bilingual tend to perform better on achievement tests. Job opportunities become available throughout the globe for those who are bilingual, and there are often financial benefits associated with bilingual skills in the labor market.

BRAIN AND COGNITIVE ADVANTAGES

The development of skills in two or more languages has been found to enhance brain-functioning with long-term cognitive benefits. Enhanced working memory and protection from brain-aging symptoms are some of the benefits of learning a new language. The ability to speak two languages is associated with more cognitive flexibility, stronger awareness and mastery of literacy, providing an intellectual advantage, such as greater superior concept formation, increased divergent thinking, pattern recognition and problem-solving. It not only prepares students to communicate in that language but also increases academic performance in other subjects. Meta-awareness of how language works and the contrastive awareness across different language systems bolster overall literacy proficiency. For students who come to school as English Learners, the simultaneous development of both English and their home language is associated with stronger performance in English than students who are educated monolingually.

ECONOMIC ADVANTAGES

As the global economy grows, so does the importance of preparing students to become proficient in at least one other world language in addition to English. The globalization of the world's economies has created a host of new and different demands on the workforce. In addition to customary careers where bilingual skills are obviously needed, knowledge of languages and cultures extends possibilities for employment in less traditional and more global careers around the world.

SOCIAL ADVANTAGES AND CROSS-CULTURAL COMPETENCY

Being bilingual offers students the opportunity to develop relationships across cultures. It has been found that students who study world languages display more tolerance for and more interest in other cultures. The study of another language expands one's worldview and builds cross-cultural understanding.

STRONGER FAMILY COHESION AND HERITAGE CONNECTION

More than one-third of California schoolchildren speak a language other than English at home. The development of strong bilingual skills that include home language and English provides them the capacity to participate actively in both of their language worlds and to be bridge builders and translators for their families. With the development of strong bilingual skills, their relationships with the family are enhanced and access to the wisdom of their heritage culture is facilitated.