



National Association
for Bilingual Education

The National Association for Bilingual Education (NABE) Formally Endorses

California's Seal of Biliteracy

At the 41st NABE Annual Conference in Dallas, Texas, February 15-17, 2012, NABE commended California for being the first state in the nation to pass legislation allowing graduating seniors to qualify for the State Seal of Biliteracy award. The Seal of Biliteracy, instituted in October 2011, honors graduating seniors with a gold insignia on their diplomas from the Superintendent of Public Instruction if they show evidence of their academic proficiency in English and at least one other world language.

The Seal of Biliteracy recognition was initiated by *Californians Together* and it fully aligns with NABE's commitment to excellence in bilingualism and biliteracy education through programs, professional development, and advocacy that value native language, respect cultural and linguistic diversity, and lead to academic success.

Additionally, by encouraging students to develop biliteracy and multilingual skills, the program helps students develop a high level of global, linguistic, cultural, and communicative competence. The Seal of Biliteracy promotes world language instruction in our nation's schools which contributes to cognitive development, enables students to participate effectively in local and universal economic contexts, enabling the expansion of international trade. It recognizes, validates and honors our rich and diverse language assets, promotes the development of cross-cultural understanding, and benefits employers through the development of staff who are proficient in more than one language. Thus, the Seal of Biliteracy is consistent with an expanded global market, allowing business owners to better serve their customers' needs, develop new ideas to better target diverse audiences and open additional channels of communication with customers.

Therefore, NABE formally endorses the Seal of Biliteracy, an exemplary model that helps prepare our students to become citizens and leaders in the 21st Century. NABE fully supports biliteracy programs as they promise the closing of academic gaps and educational equity for all students, based on sound research and practices. NABE strongly encourages all of our state affiliates and members to join the Seal of Biliteracy movement through the recognition of bilingual, biliterate students. Finally, NABE is committed to including sessions similar to the Seal of Biliteracy ideal in its future annual conferences to support members in the establishment of biliteracy or multilingual recognition models in educational systems throughout the country.

For more information, please visit www.californianstogether.org/reports (Resources for Implementing the Seal of Biliteracy) or contact Shelly Spiegel-Coleman, Executive Director, *Californians Together* at shelly@californianstogether.org.