

House Bill 879

By: Representatives Taylor of the 79th, Reeves of the 34th, Stephens of the 164th, and Beskin of the 54th

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

1 To amend Part 3 of Article 6 of Chapter 2 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia
2 Annotated, relating to elementary and secondary educational programs, so as to provide for
3 the issuance of a seal of biliteracy for high school graduates who have achieved a high level
4 of proficiency in speaking, reading, and writing one or more languages in addition to
5 English; to provide for criteria; to provide for participation; to provide for related matters;
6 to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

7 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

8 SECTION 1.

9 Part 3 of Article 6 of Chapter 2 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated,
10 relating to elementary and secondary educational programs, is amended by adding a new
11 Code section to read as follows:

12 "20-2-159.5.

13 (a) There is established a Georgia Seal of Biliteracy to recognize high school graduates
14 who have attained a high level of proficiency in speaking, reading, and writing one or more
15 languages in addition to English.

16 (b) The purposes of the Georgia Seal of Biliteracy are as follows:

17 (1) To encourage pupils to study foreign languages;

18 (2) To certify attainment of biliteracy;

19 (3) To provide employers with a method to identify people with language and biliteracy
20 skills;

21 (4) To provide universities with a method to recognize and give academic credit to
22 applicants seeking admission; and

23 (5) To recognize and promote foreign language instruction in public schools.

24 (c) In order to qualify for the Georgia Seal of Biliteracy, a high school graduate shall meet
25 the following criteria:

- 26 (1) Completion of all English language arts requirements for graduation with an overall
27 grade point average of 3.0 or above in those classes; and
28 (2) Proficiency in one or more languages other than English, demonstrated through one
29 of the following methods:
30 (A) Passing a foreign language advanced placement examination with a score of 3 or
31 higher or an international baccalaureate examination with a score of 4 or higher;
32 provided, however, that for languages in which an advanced placement examination is
33 not available, the Department of Education may provide a listing of equivalent
34 summative examinations that local school systems may use in place of such an
35 advanced placement examination;
36 (B) Successfully completing a four-year high school course of study in a foreign
37 language and attaining an overall grade point average of 3.0 or above in such course of
38 study; or
39 (C) Passing the SAT II foreign language examination with a score of 600 or higher.
40 (d)(1) A local school system participating in the Georgia Seal of Biliteracy program shall
41 maintain appropriate records in order to identify pupils who have earned a Georgia Seal
42 of Biliteracy and shall affix the appropriate insignia to the diploma or transcript of each
43 pupil who earns such seal.
44 (2) Local school system participation in the Georgia Seal of Biliteracy program shall be
45 voluntary. No local school system shall be required to expend additional resources or
46 hire additional personnel to implement the provisions of this Code section.
47 (e) The Department of Education shall prepare and deliver to participating local school
48 systems an appropriate insignia to be affixed to the diploma or transcript of the pupil
49 indicating that such pupil has been awarded a Georgia Seal of Biliteracy."

50 **SECTION 2.**

51 All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.