



JAMES I. O'NEILL HIGH SCHOOL

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Dear Parent or Guardian:

In an effort to recognize the students who have mastered two or more languages by the time they graduate high school, the Board of Regents has chosen to adopt the New York State Seal of Biliteracy (NYSSB). The Seal of Biliteracy is not for every student who has taken a foreign language or speak a second language, however. It is for those who have attained "a high level of proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing in one or more languages, in addition to English." If students complete the process described below and qualify, this recognition will be an actual seal on their diploma.

The intent of the NYSSB is to:

- encourage the study of languages;
- identify high school graduates with language and biliteracy skills for employers;
- provide universities with additional information about applicants seeking admission;
- prepare students with twenty-first century skills;
- recognize the value of foreign and a native language instruction in schools;
- affirm the value of diversity in a multilingual society.

The NYSSB will be awarded by the Commissioner to students who meet criteria established by the Board of Regents in districts that voluntarily agree to participate in the program; Highland Falls-Fort Montgomery Central School District (HFFMCS D) is one of those districts. This award advances HFFMCS D's commitment that every student graduates prepared and equipped with the knowledge and skills to participate in college, a career, and a diverse 21st century society.

Each candidate for the Seal of Biliteracy must complete an application, meet assessment requirements, and complete a summative project which includes an essay, interview and presentation and will be reviewed by the school's NYSSB Committee. Applications are attached to this letter and will be available in the guidance office as well as on the HFFMCS D website. **The application declaring your intent to pursue the Seal of Biliteracy is due on January 15, 2019.** The other requirements will be due at the end of April and in mid-May. For more information, please contact the Guidance Office at 845-446-9575 x2600.

Sincerely,

Debbie M. Brand
Principal