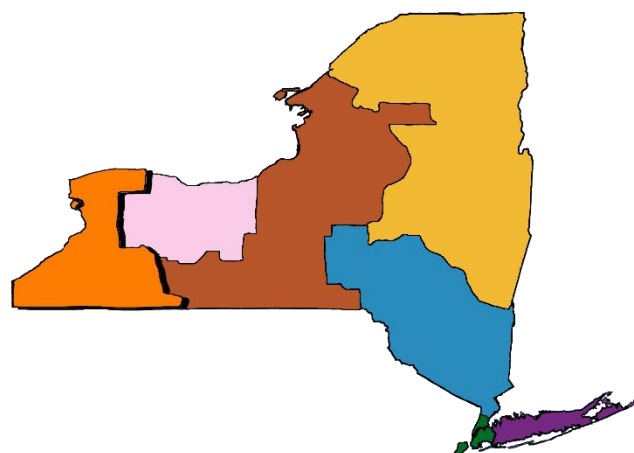


The New York State Seal of Biliteracy in the Western Region



2020-21 Report

Office of Bilingual Education
and World Languages

New York State Education Department



New York State
EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
Knowledge > Skill > Opportunity



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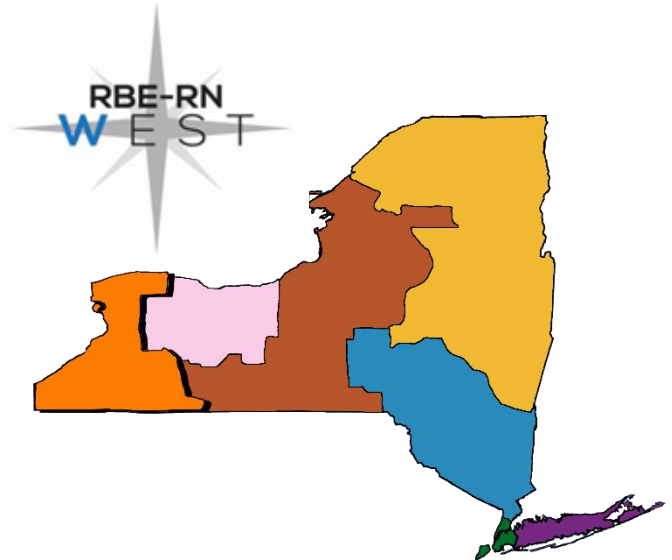
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The Western Region

The Western region, represented by the area in orange on the map on the right, is made up of the counties of: Allegany, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Erie, Niagara, and Orleans.

The Western region is supported by the Regional Bilingual Education Resource Network (RBERN) West at Erie 1 BOCES. This RBERN provides services to 101 districts, including professional learning on high-quality instruction and assessment practices that support academic the achievement for English Language Learners (ELLs), technical assistance and workshops for the design and implementation of educational programs for ELLs, as well as workshops on state and federal laws, regulations, and policies, and a support network of resources and collaboration for the education of ELLs. The goal of the RBERN is to enhance the knowledge and competencies of educators, parents, and community members in order to promote the academic excellence of ELLs.

Figure 1. Map of New York State by Region with the Western Region Highlighted (Image downloaded from: <https://www.nysbernondemand.org/> on 12/16/21.)



RBERN West, Erie 1 BOCES

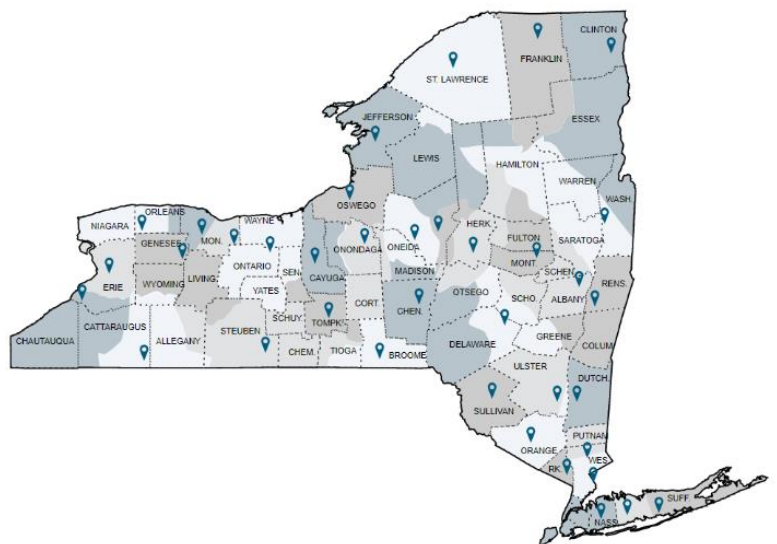
355 Harlem Rd, Building C, West Seneca, NY 14224, Tel: (716) 821-7531

Website: <http://www.rbernwest.e1b.org>, Email: RBERNwest@e1b.org

This Western region is also serviced by the following BOCES shown in Figure 2 below:

- [Cattaraugus-Allegany-Erie-Wyoming Counties and BOCES](#)
- [Erie County and BOCES \(Erie 1\)](#)
- [Erie-Chautauqua-Cattaraugus Counties and BOCES \(Erie 2-Chautauqua-Cattaraugus\)](#)
- [Orleans-Niagara Counties and BOCES](#)

Figure 2. Map of New York State by County with BOCES Pinned (Image downloaded from: <https://www.boces.org/contact-a-boces/> on 12/16/21.)




An infographic summary of the NYSSB in the Western region for 2020-21 can be found on the following two pages in Figure 3.


Figure 3. Infographic Summary of the NYSSB in the Western Region (2021)




NYS Seal of Biliteracy Western Region 2020-21

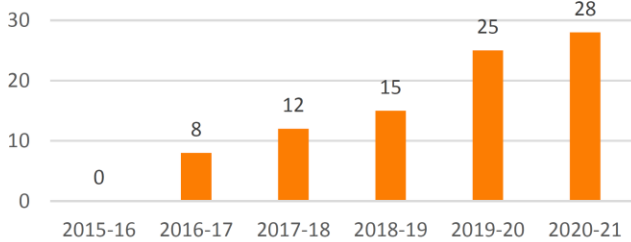


 The New York Seal of Biliteracy (NYSSB) recognizes students from district, charter, and non-public schools who have attained **a high level of proficiency in two or more world languages** (one of which must be English) by high school graduation. It acknowledges the importance of biliteracy in today's global society.

-  The intent of the NYSSB is to:
- affirm the value of diversity in a multilingual society;
 - encourage the study of languages;
 - identify high school graduates with multilingualism and multiliteracy skills for employers;
 - provide universities with additional information about applicants seeking admission;
 - prepare students with twenty-first century skills; and
 - recognize the value of world and home language instruction in schools.

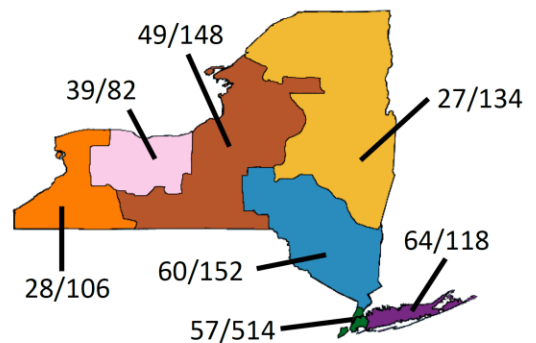
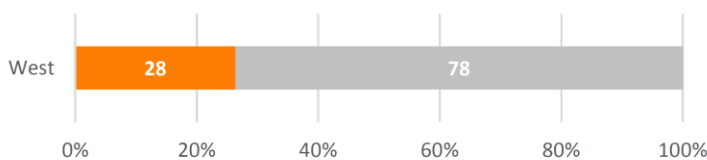
 The NYSSB carries the highest weight on a school's ["Readiness Measures"](#), on par with the NYS Regents Diploma with Advanced Designation and Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate exams. This also includes current ELLs not in the graduation cohort earning the NYSSB and a Regents Diploma.

Number of Schools Offering the NYSSB in the Western Region (2016-2021)



26.4% of district schools in the Western region offered the NYSSB in 2020-21.

Number of District Schools Offering vs. Not Offering the NYSSB in the Western Region (2020-21)



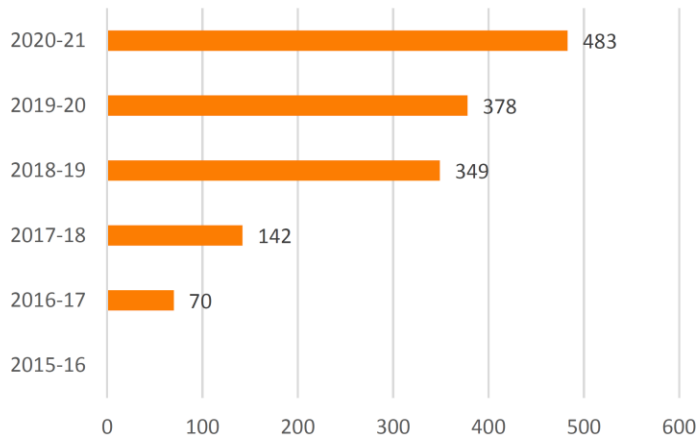
The ratios listed are the number of schools offering the NYSSB to the total number of district schools in the region.

Languages in which students from the Western region earned the NYSSB in 2020-21

Arabic, Bengali, Burmese, Dari, English, French, German, Hausa, Kinyamulenge, Kinyarwanda, Korean, Latin, Lingala, Mandarin, Pashto, Polish, Portuguese, Punjabi, Russian, Somali, Spanish, Swahili, Tamil, Tuscarora, Urdu, and Vietnamese

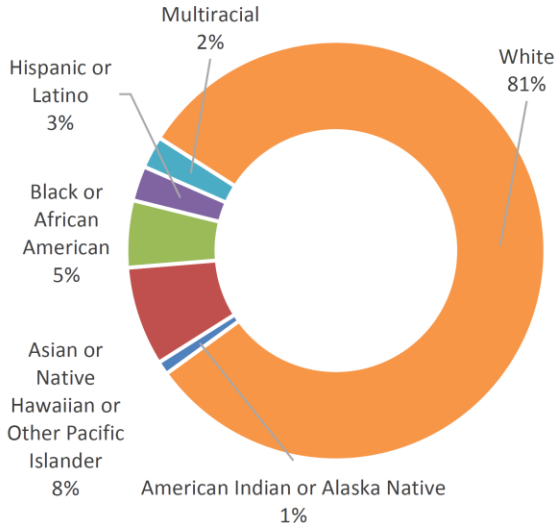
483 students from the Western region earned the NYSSB in 2020-21.

NYSSB Earners in the Western Region
(2016-2021)



Despite the challenges posed by the COVID pandemic, the number of students from the Western region earning the NYSSB continues to increase.

Percentage of Students who Earned the NYSSB in the Western Region by Race (2020-21)



4 Students from the Western region earned the NYSSB in **two** world languages in addition to English in 2020-21.

Seal Earners by Gender

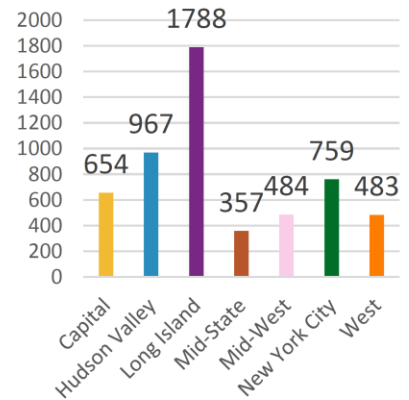

334
(Female)


149
(Male)

Seal Earners by ELL Status

Current ELLs	22
Former/Ever ELLs	20
Never ELLs - Home Language = English	425
Never ELLs - Home Language ≠ English	16

Current ELLs are students who, by birth or ancestry, speak or understand a language other than English and who score below the designated level on the NYS English language proficiency assessment. **Ever ELLs** (includes Former ELLs) are students who were once ELLs, but who have demonstrated the NYS designated level of proficiency necessary to exit ELL status. **Never ELLs** are students who have never been identified as ELLs. A Never ELL's home language may be English or another world language.



Your local RBERN can also provide support for your Seal of Biliteracy Program.
RBERN West, Erie 1 BOCES
 355 Harlem Rd, Building C, West Seneca, NY 14224, Tel: (716) 821-7531
 Website: <http://www.rbernwest.e1b.org>, Email: RBERNwest@e1b.org

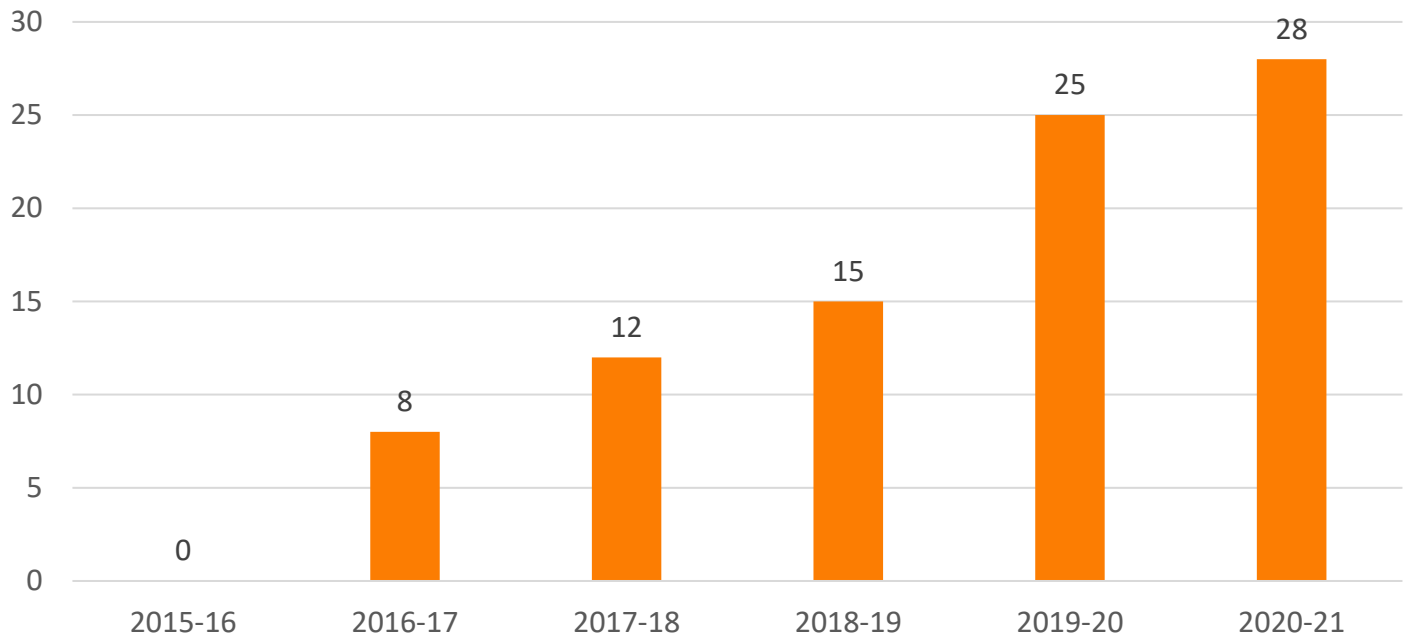


Office of Bilingual Education and World Languages, New York State Education Department
[NYSSB Website](http://www.nyssb.org), Email: nyssb@nysed.gov

Schools that Offered the NYSSB

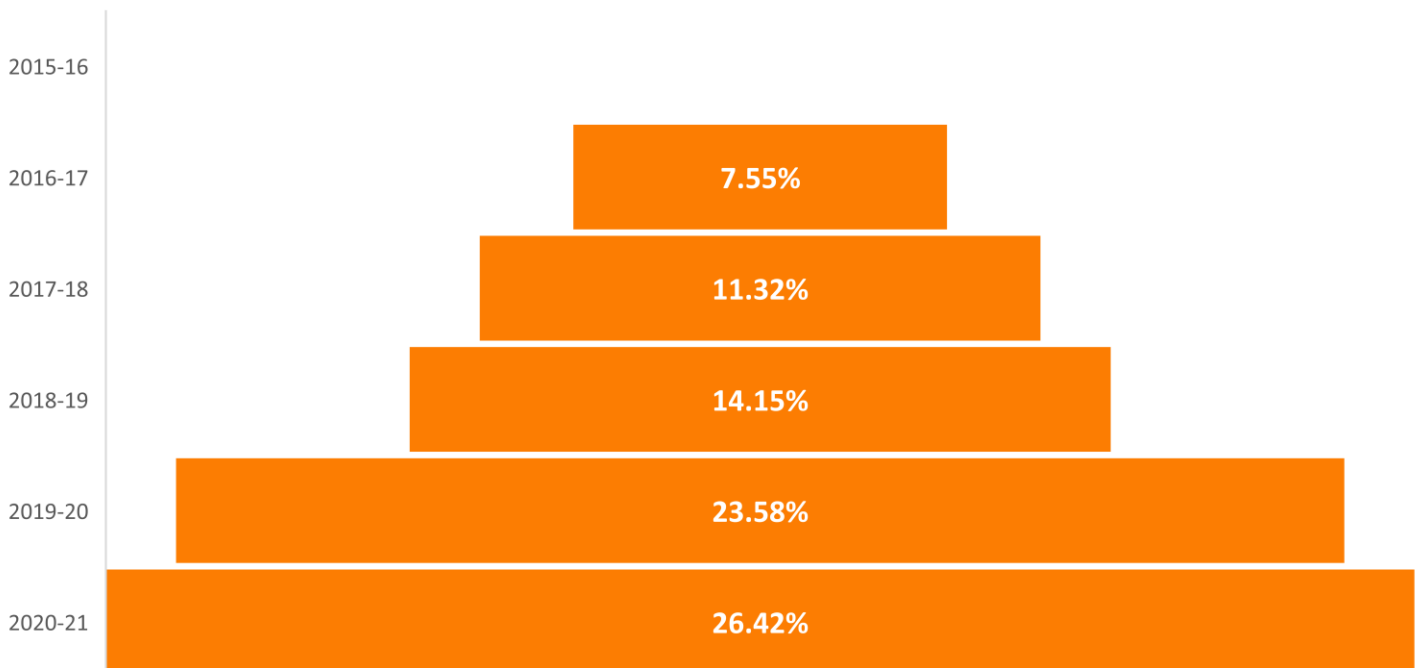
The number of schools in the Western region that offered the NYSSB rose in 2020-21 to 28 schools, as shown in Figure 4.

Figure 4. Growth in the Number of Western Region High Schools Offering the NYSSB (2016-2021)



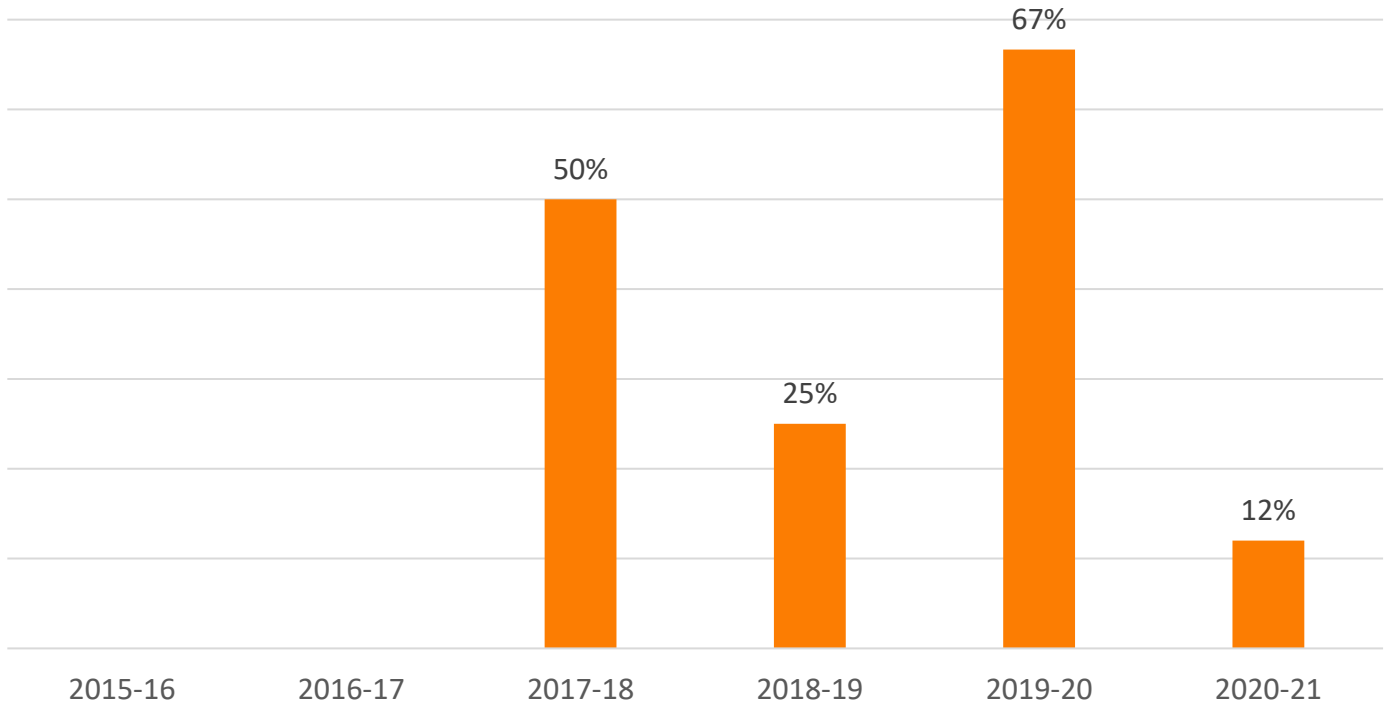
The 28 schools in the Western region that offered the NYSSB represented over 25% of district high schools in the region, or almost one in every four district high schools. As demonstrated in Figure 5, the percentage of schools in the Western region has experienced a steady growth over the last five years.

Figure 5. Western NYSSB Schools as a Percentage of Total District High Schools in the Western Region (2016-2021)



The growth rate in the number of schools offering the NYSSB in the Western region has seen some significant swings in the last four years, with the lowest growth rate in 2020-21, presumably a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic's impact on schools.

Figure 6. Percentage of Growth in Number of Schools in the Western Region Offering the NYSSB (2016-2021)

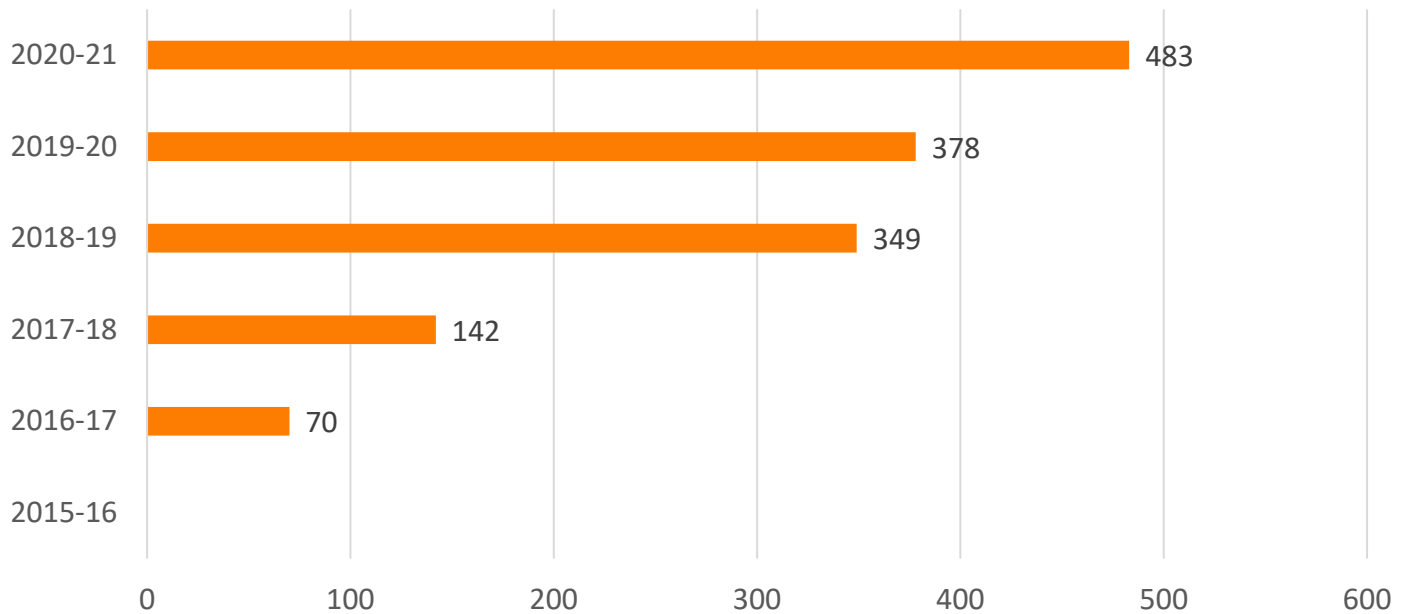


2021 NYSSB graduates from Frewsburg High School
(Photo courtesy of Frewsburg CSD)

Students Who Earned the NYSSB

The number of students who earned the NYSSB in the Western region grew substantially in 2020-21 to 483 students, up more than 27% from the prior year.

Figure 7. Number of Students Awarded the NYSSB in the Western Region (2016-2021)

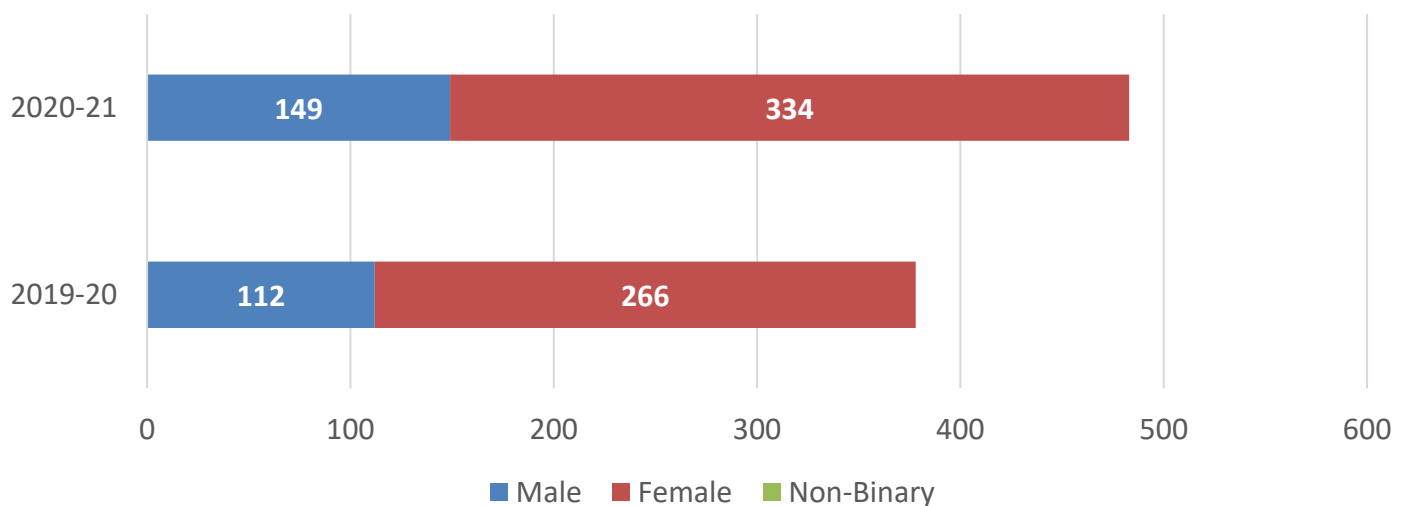


Seal Earners by Gender

The gender make-up of the NYSSB class of 2020-21 from the Western region changed only slightly from the prior year:

- Seal earners who identify as male represented almost 30% of all NYSSB earners from the region in 2019-20 and rose to 31% in 2020-21, a gain of 1%.
- Seal earners who identify as female represented 70% of all NYSSB earners from the region in 2019-20 and fell to 69% in 2020-21, a loss of 1%.
- 2020-21 was the first year that students pursuing the NYSSB were able to identify as non-binary. None of the NYSSB earners from the Western region identified in this way in 2020-21.

Figure 8. Number of Students Awarded the NYSSB in the Western Region by Gender (2020-2021)



Seal Earners by Race and Ethnicity

When disaggregated by race and ethnicity, the data on Seal earners in the Western region shows minor increases and decreases in NYSSB participation by students of different races and ethnicities. Increases in participation were seen in 2020-21 among Multiracial students (from 1% to 2%) and among White students (from 73% to 81%). Participation rates among American Indian or Alaska Native students remained constant at 1%. Decreases were seen in 2020-21 participation among Asian, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander students (12% to 8%), among Black or African American students (from 7% to 5%), and among Hispanic or Latino students (from 6% to 3%).

Figure 9. Number of Students Awarded the NYSSB in the Western Region by Race/Ethnicity (2020)

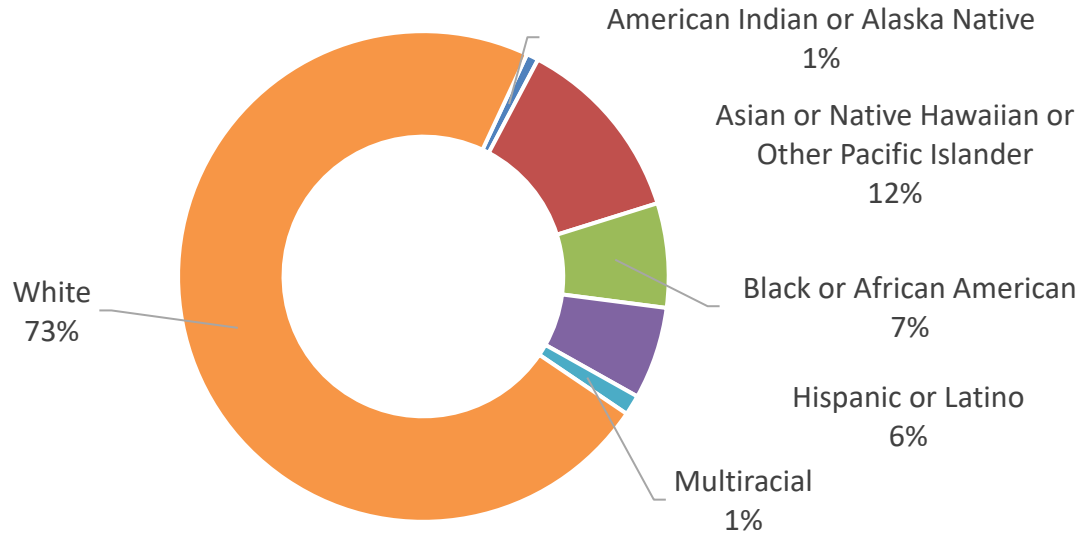
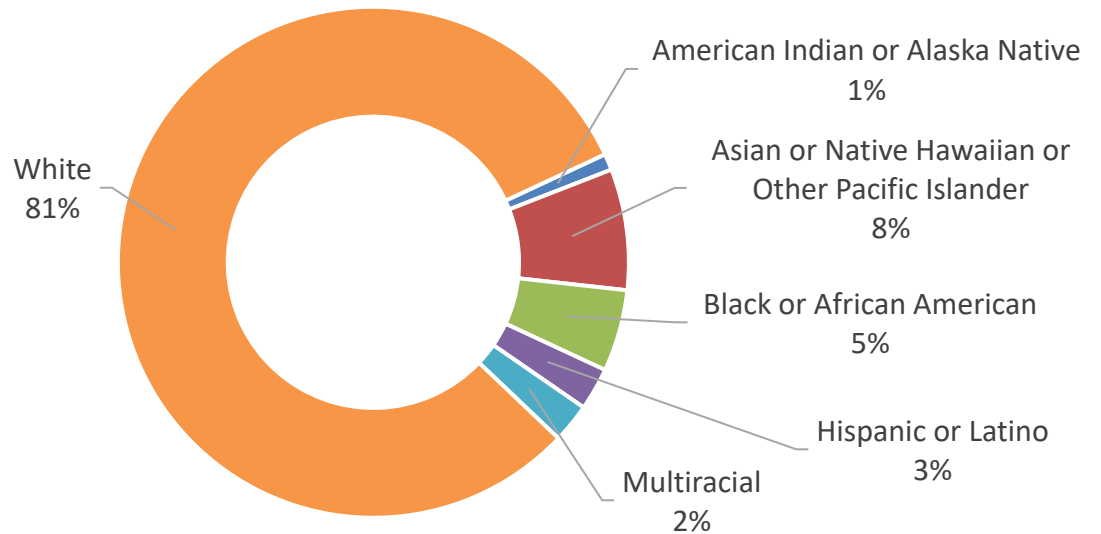


Figure 10. Number of Students Awarded the NYSSB in the Western Region by Race/Ethnicity (2021)



Seal Earners by ELL Status

There are four student sub-groups which are eligible to pursue the NYSSB:

- Current English Language Learners (ELLs) - students who, by birth or ancestry, speak or understand a language other than English and who score below the designated level on the NYS English language proficiency assessment. Current ELLs generally earn the NYSSB in their home language and English.
- Ever ELLs - students who were once ELLs, but who have demonstrated the NYS designated level of proficiency necessary to exit ELL status. Ever ELLs generally earn the NYSSB in their home language and English, although some may take a course of study in another language in which to pursue the NYSSB.
- Never ELLs whose home language is English - students who have never been identified as ELLs and whose home language is English. This sub-group of Never ELLs generally earns the NYSSB in English and a world language that they study through the Checkpoint C level.
- Never ELLs whose home language is other than English - students who have never been identified as ELLs and whose home language is other than English. This sub-group of Never ELLs generally earns the NYSSB in English and their home language, but may also do so in a language that they study in school.

Table 1. Number of Students Who Earned the NYSSB in the Western Region by ELL Status (2016-2021)

	ELLs	Ever ELLs	Never ELLs (Home Language = English)	Never ELLs (Home Language = Other Than English)*
2015-16	0	0	0	n/a
2016-17	1	10	59	n/a
2017-18	11	16	115	n/a
2018-19	27	23	299	n/a
2019-20	19	53	306	n/a
2020-21	22	20	425	16
Total	80	122	1,204	16

*In 2020-21, NYSED divided the “Never ELL” subgroup of students into those whose home language was English and those whose home language was other than English. Schools were able to report numbers for each of these new subgroups for the first time in 2020-21. Prior to that, this subgroup of students was included in a general “Never ELL” category.

Historically in the Western region, as well as in most other regions of the state, the majority of students who earn the NYSSB are Never ELLs whose home language is English and who earn the NYSSB in English and in a world language studied in school. The participation in the NYSSB among Current ELLs in the Western region peaked in 2018-19, fell below 20 in 2019-20, but is growing slowly at present. To increase the number of Current ELLs participating in the NYSSB:

1. More schools in the Western region are encouraged to sign on to offer the NYSSB. Just over one in every four district high schools in the Western region offered the NYSSB to their students in 2020-21.
2. Schools offering the NYSSB are encouraged to have systems in place to support students’ acquisition of English as well as the development of the home language(s) of Current ELLs.

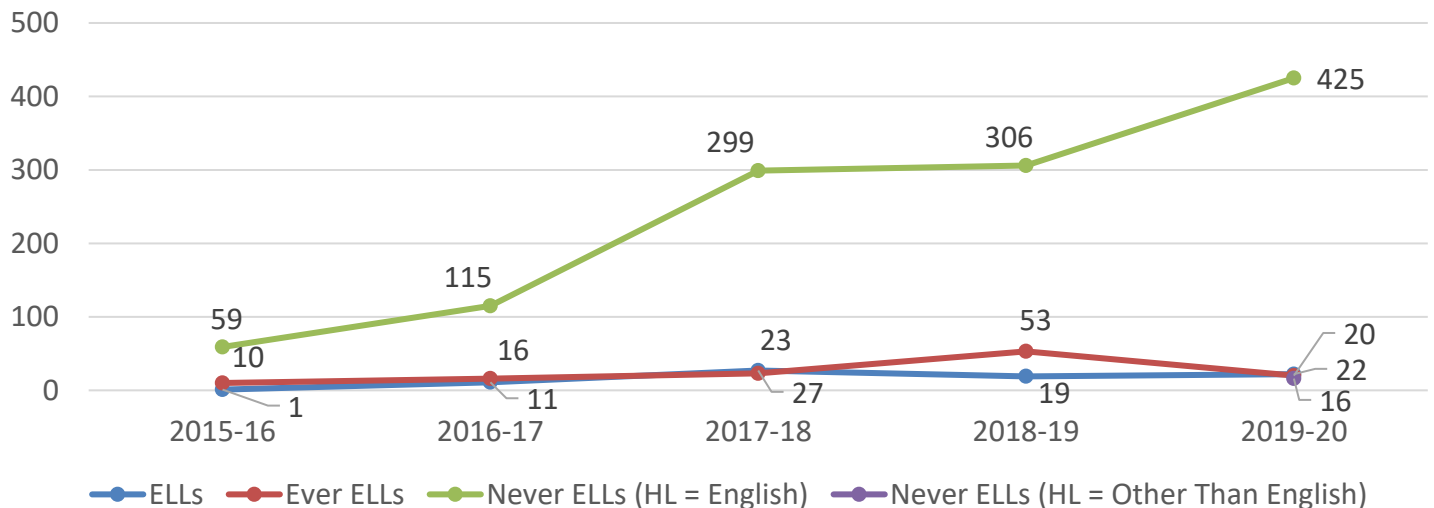
3. Schools offering the NYSSB are encouraged to develop promotional materials in the preferred languages of their ELL families to ensure parents are made aware of the opportunity and benefits of earning the NYSSB.
4. Schools offering the NYSSB are encouraged to develop a network of adults among their staff and within their communities that are qualified speakers of other languages, focusing on the languages spoken by their Current and Ever ELLs, so as to support the participation in the NYSSB by these students. These adults can serve as advisors to students pursuing the NYSSB and as members of the panel of reviewers that evaluates the students' Culminating Projects.

The number of Ever/Former ELLs in the Western region peaked in 2019-20 at 53 students. In 2020-21, less than 50% of the total Former/Ever ELLs from the prior year earned the NYSSB. It is plausible that the significant drop in participation in the NYSSB by Current and Former/Ever ELLs could have been a result of the pandemic, which could potentially have impacted these students more negatively than their Never ELL counterparts.

Never ELLs whose home language is English have historically represented the vast majority of Seal earners, not only within the Western region, but across New York State. This population of Seal earners has shown the most drastic growth within the region, from 59 Seal earners in the first year the NYSSB was offered to 425 in 2020-21, representing an almost eight-fold growth rate over five years. It is likely that Never ELLs whose home language is English is the most easily identifiable student sub-group, given that they represent any senior who is currently completing a Checkpoint C world language course, or seniors who completed such a class with an average of 85% or better in the prior year. These students are enrolled in coursework that directly supports attainment of the NYSSB, including regular access to instructors who speak the world language in which the students are pursuing the NYSSB.

Starting in the 2020-21 school year, the subgroup "Never ELLs" was divided into those whose home language is English and those whose home language is other than English. The purpose of this re-categorization is to distinguish students who are native English speakers from those who speak a language other than English at home. This latter group of students is often referred to as Heritage Language Speakers. Schools often face challenges in identifying these students as potential NYSSB applicants since they were not identified as ELLs and may speak a language that is not taught in their schools. A total of 16 Never ELLs whose home language (HL) is other than English earned the NYSSB in the Western region in 2020-21.

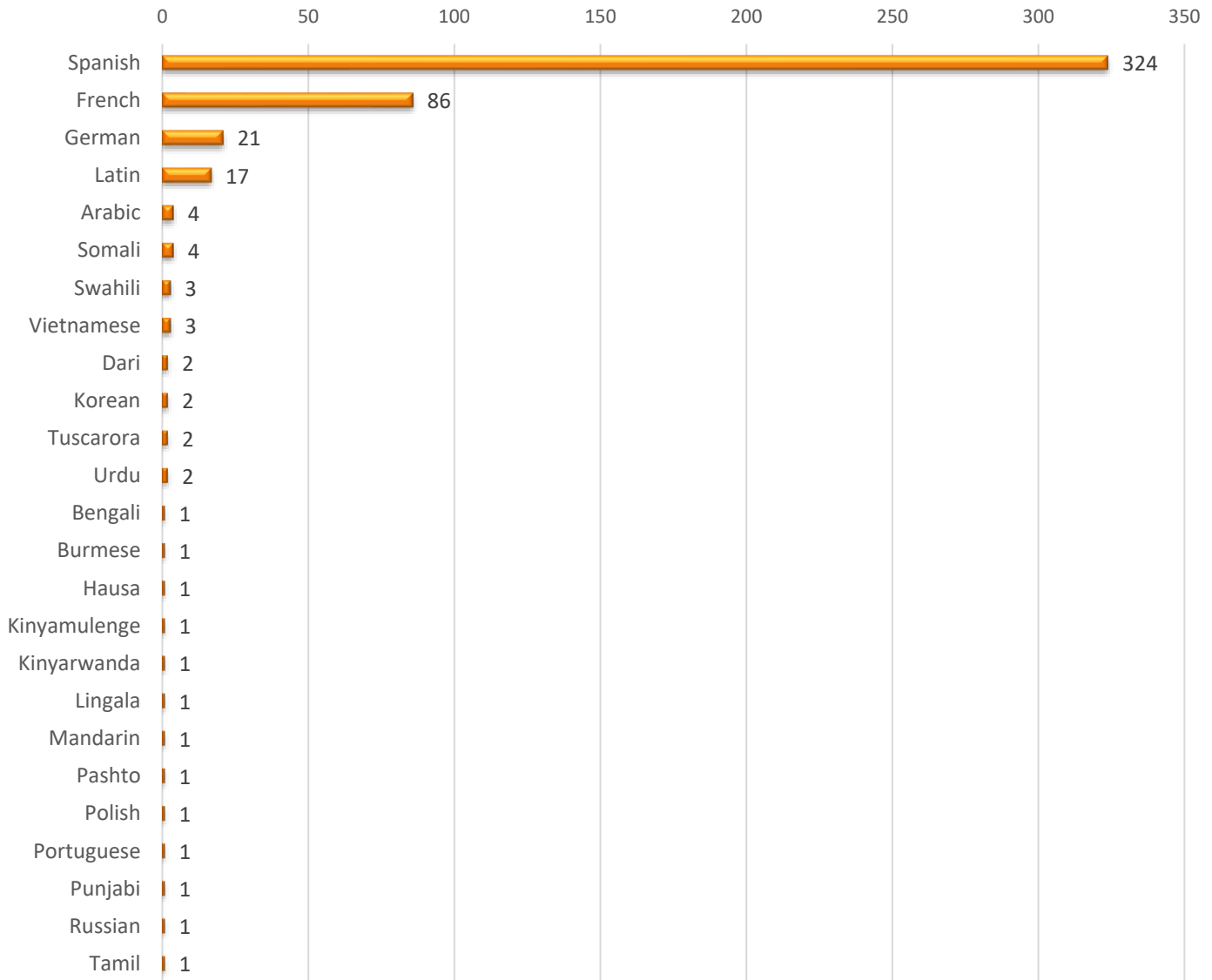
Figure 11. Number of Students Who Earned the NYSSB in the Western Region by ELL Status (2016-2021)



Seal Earners by Language

Students from the Western region earned the NYSSB in Arabic, Bengali, Burmese, Dari, English, French, German, Hausa, Kinyamulenge, Kinyarwanda, Korean, Latin, Lingala, Mandarin, Pashto, Polish, Portuguese, Punjabi, Russian, Somali, Spanish, Swahili, Tamil, Tuscarora, Urdu, and Vietnamese. Figure 12 shows the world languages other than English in which students earned the NYSSB in the Western region, ranked from most to least frequent.

Figure 12. Number of Students Who Earned the NYSSB in the Western Region by World Language (2016-2021)



Four students were awarded the NYSSB in two world languages in addition to English, as show in Figure 13.

Figure 13. Number of Students Who Earned the NYSSB in the Western Region in Two World Languages in Addition to English (2021)

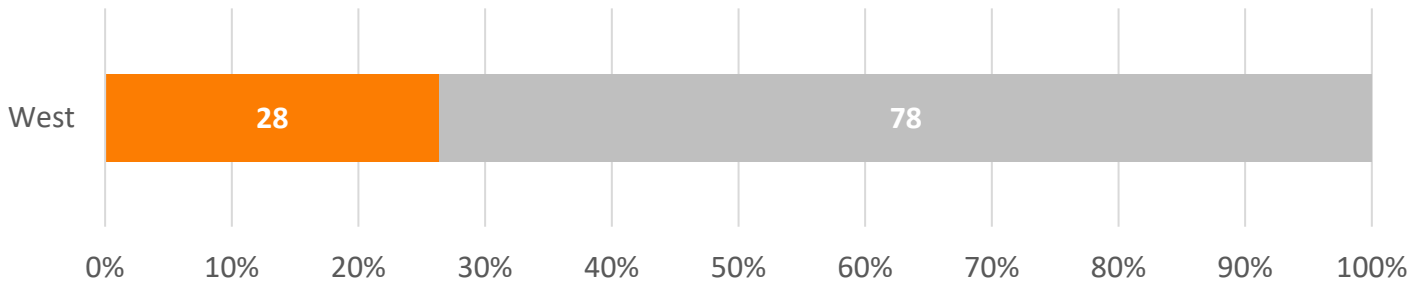


Areas for Potential Growth of the NYSSB in the Western Region

Schools

There is significant potential for growth within this region that has 78 district high schools that did not have a NYSSB program as of 2020-21, as shown in Figure 14 below.

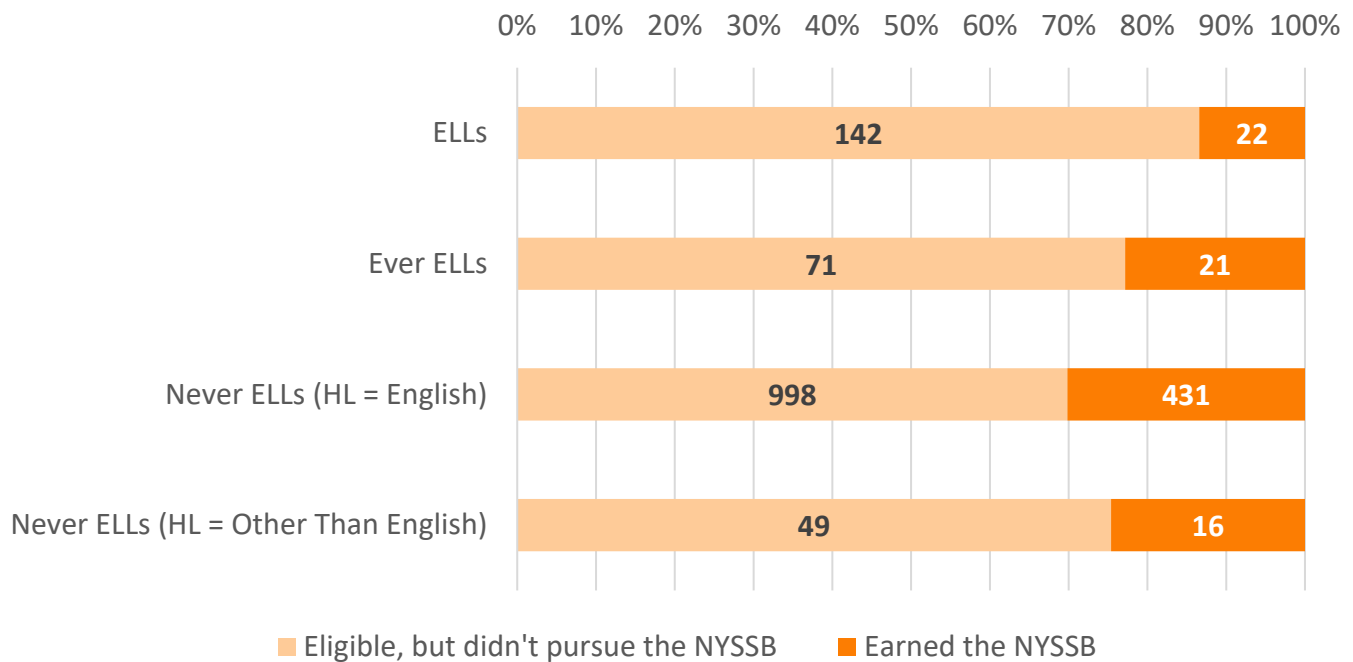
Figure 14. District High Schools in the Western Region Offering vs. Not Offering the NYSSB (2021)



Students

In the Western region, as in most regions, the largest group of students earning the NYSSB are Never ELLs whose home language is English and who are taking a course of study in a world language in high school. Figure 15 below shows the total students in the Western region who earned the NYSSB in 2020-21 as compared to those who were eligible, but did not pursue the NYSSB, disaggregated by ELL status.

Figure 15. Seal Earners vs. Eligible Students Not Pursuing the NYSSB in the Western Region by ELL Status (2021)



Eligible students include any student graduating in 2020-21 who was proficient in or studying English and another world language at the Checkpoint C level or higher.

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New York State Department of Education (NYSED) (2019). *The New York State Seal of Biliteracy 2018-19 Report*. By the Office of Bilingual Education and World Languages.

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New York State Department of Education (NYSED) (2022). *The New York State Seal of Biliteracy 2020-21 Report*. By the Office of Bilingual Education and World Languages.



2021 NYSSB graduate from Riverside Academy
(Photo courtesy of Buffalo PS)