



**Title of Project**

A Critical Ethnography of Ohio's Seal of Biliteracy Policy and Implementation in Urban, Suburban and Rural District Typologies

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**TIRF Research Topic Investigated**

Language Planning & Policy

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**Project Summary**

The Seal of Biliteracy (SoBL) is awarded by U.S. states' departments of education or local school districts to graduating high school students who meet the language proficiency requirements in English, World Language (WL), or Heritage Languages (HLs) spoken in students' homes. As an antithesis to assimilationist, monolingual English-only policies that prevailed in the US for many years, the SoBL is a promising language education policy. It promotes both WL education for English-dominant students and promotes HL maintenance for linguistically diverse students. The SoBL was first adopted in California in 2008 and it then spread to more than 40 U.S. states within the first decade.

Employing a critical ethnography of language policy approach, this project investigates the development, promotion, and implementation of SoBL in urban, suburban, and rural school districts in Ohio which has not been explored by any previous research. To explore the implementation of this promising language education policy in practice, this study will adopt a multi-method approach where the analysis of policy and promotional texts are combined with stakeholder interviews and observations. By employing a multiple case study methodology, the findings of this study will provide rich information regarding the development, implementation, and promotion efforts of SoBL in different district typologies. Findings will also reveal the issues of equity and access in Ohio's SoBL implementation impacting English learners, and HL speakers in the state.