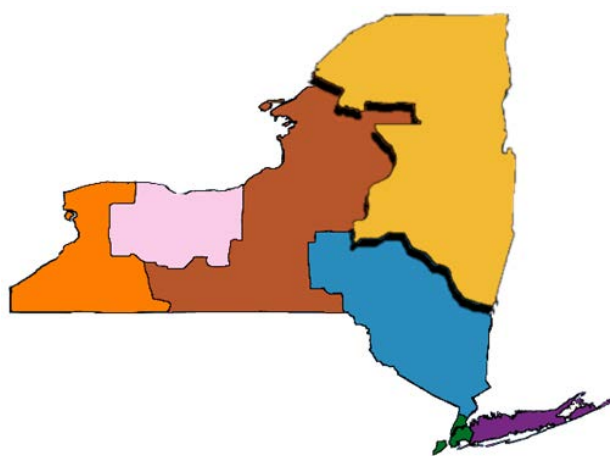
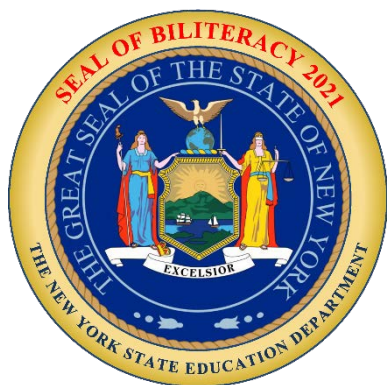


The New York State Seal of Biliteracy in the Capital Region



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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Table of Contents

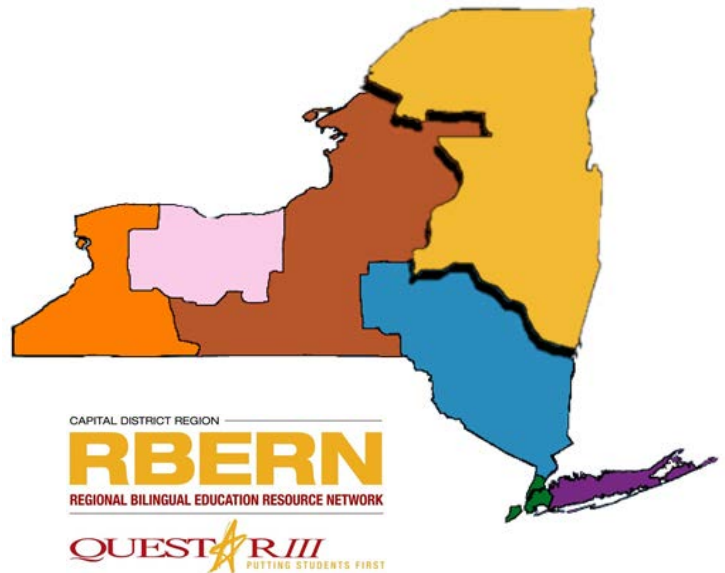
The Capital Region	4
Schools that Offered the NYSSB.....	7
Students Who Earned the NYSSB.....	9
Seal Earners by Gender	9
Seal Earners by Race and Ethnicity	10
Seal Earners by ELL Status.....	11
Seal Earners by Language.....	13
Areas for Potential Growth of the NYSSB in the Capital Region.....	14
Schools.....	14
Students.....	14
List of Figures and Tables.....	15
References	16

The Capital Region

The Capital region, represented by the area in yellow on the map on the right, is made up of the counties of Albany, Clinton, Columbia, Essex, Franklin, Fulton, Greene, Hamilton, Montgomery, Rensselaer, Saratoga, Schenectady, Schoharie, St. Lawrence, Warren, and Washington.

The Capital region is supported by the Capital District Regional Bilingual Education Resource Network (RBERN) at Questar III BOCES. This RBERN provides services to 149 districts and eight charter schools, including support for English as a New Language and Dual Language Bilingual programs, as well as professional learning, technical support, and embedded coaching. The mission of the RBERN is to develop and strengthen the skills, knowledge, and competencies of educators, parents, and local communities, to provide technical assistance, professional learning, and resource materials to support academic achievement of English Language Learners (ELLs), and to support NYSED's commitment to higher standards for all students.

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



Contact

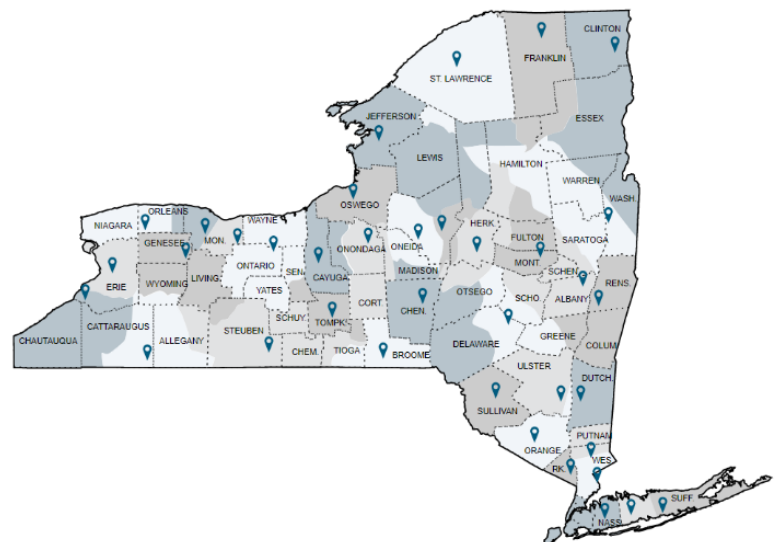
Capital District RBERN, 10 Empire State Blvd., Castleton, NY 12033, Tel: (518) 477-8771

Website: <http://www.rbern.org>, Contact: <http://www.rbern.org/contact>

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

- [Albany-Schoharie-Schenectady-Saratoga Counties and BOCES](#) (Capital Region BOCES)
- [Clinton-Essex-Warren-Washington Counties and BOCES](#) (Champlain Valley Educational Services)
- [Franklin-Essex-Hamilton BOCES](#)
- [Hamilton-Fulton-Montgomery BOCES](#)
- [Questar III BOCES](#) (includes the Capital District RBERN)
- [Saint Lawrence-Lewis BOCES](#)
- [Washington-Saratoga-Warren-Hamilton-Essex 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 Capital region for 2020-21 can be found on the following two pages in Figure 3.

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





NYS Seal of Biliteracy Capital Region 2020-21



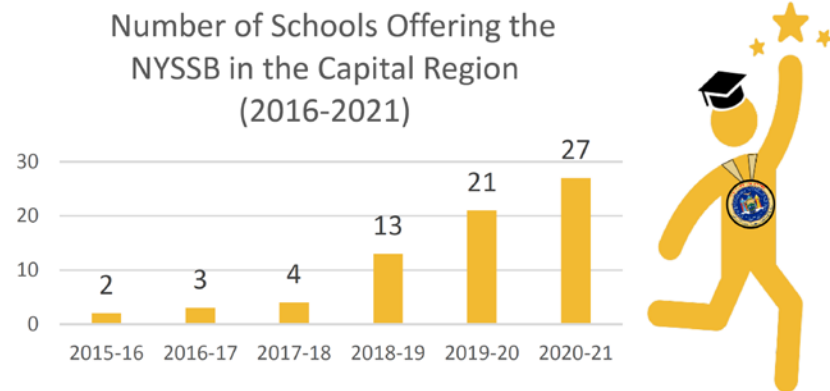


The New York Seal of Biliteracy (NYSSB) recognizes students from district, charter, and non-public schools who have attained a **high level of proficiency in two or more world languages** (one of which must be English) by high school graduation. It acknowledges the importance of biliteracy in today's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

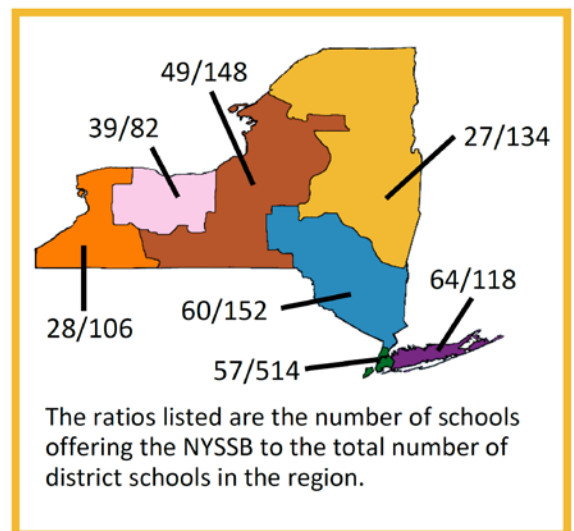
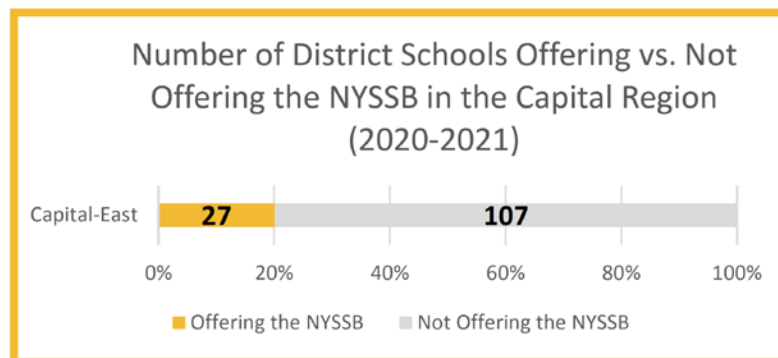
- 
- The intent of the NYSSB is to:
- affirm the value of diversity in a multilingual society;
 - encourage the study of languages;
 - identify high school graduates with multilingualism and multiliteracy skills for employers;
 - provide universities with additional information about applicants seeking 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.



20.2%
of district schools in the Capital region offered the NYSSB in 2020-21.

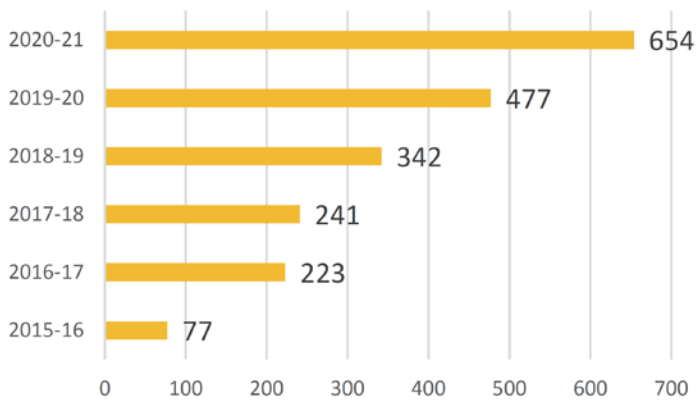


Languages in which Capital region students earned the NYSSB in 2020-21

Albanian, American Sign Language, Arabic, Bisaya/Cebuano, Chuukese, English, French, German, Gujarati, Japanese, Latin, Mandarin, Russian, Spanish, Tagalog and Urdu

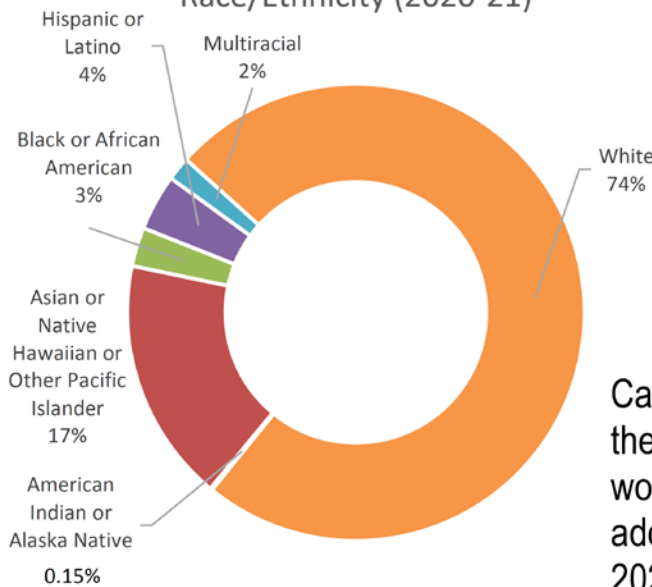
654 students from the Capital region earned the NYSSB in 2020-21.

NYSSB Earners in the Capital Region
(2016-2021)



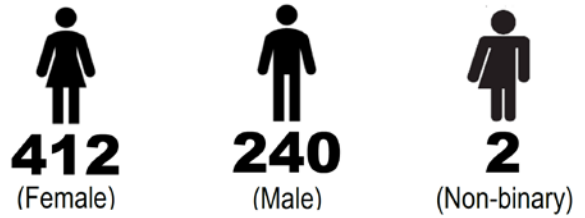
Despite the challenges posed by the COVID pandemic, the number of students from the Capital region earning the NYSSB continues to increase.

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



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

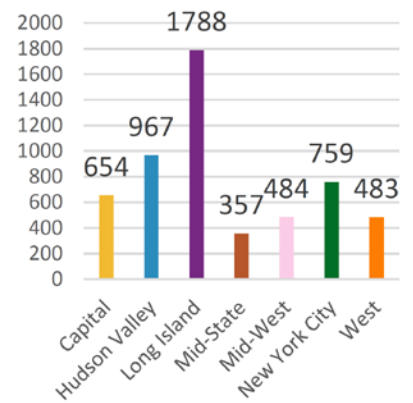
Seal Earners by Gender



Seal Earners by ELL Status

Current ELLs	4
Former/Ever ELLs	18
Never ELLs - Home Language = English	578
Never ELLs - Home Language ≠ English	54

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.

Capital District Region RBERN

10 Empire State Blvd., Castleton, NY 12033, Tel: (518) 477-8771

Website: <http://www.rbern.org>, Contact: <http://www.rbern.org/contact>

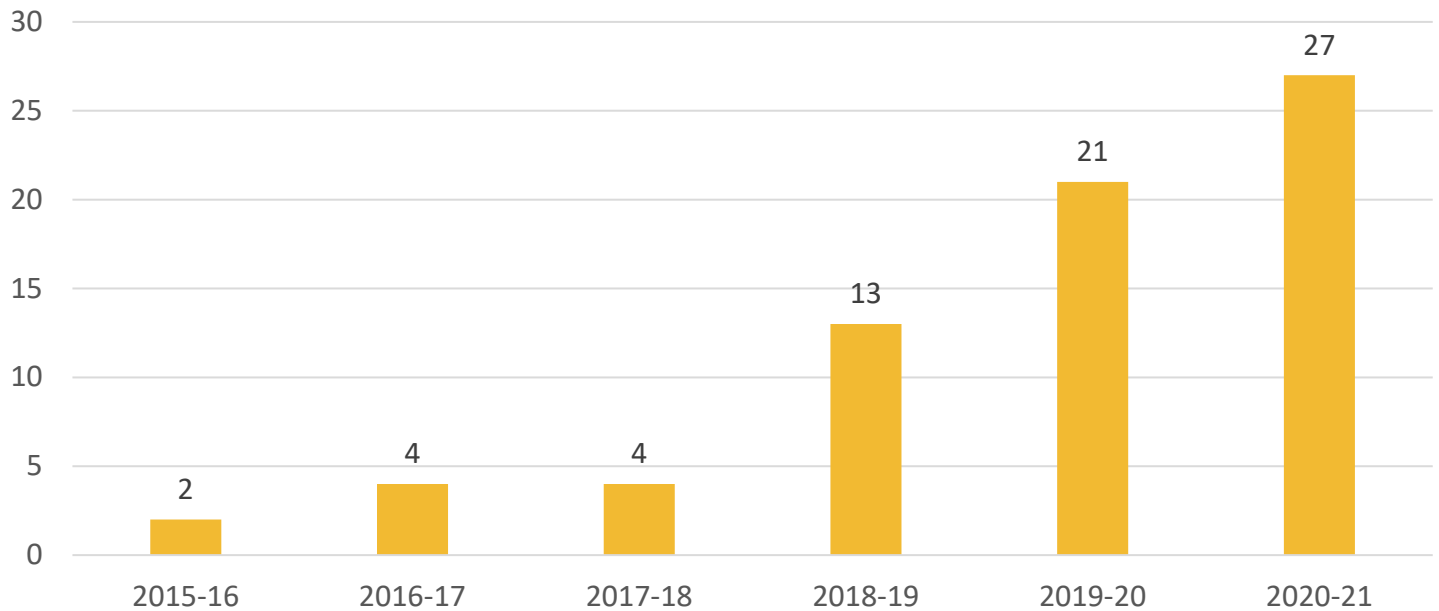


Office of Bilingual Education and World Languages, New York State Education Department
NYSSB Website, Email: nyssb@nysed.gov

Schools that Offered the NYSSB

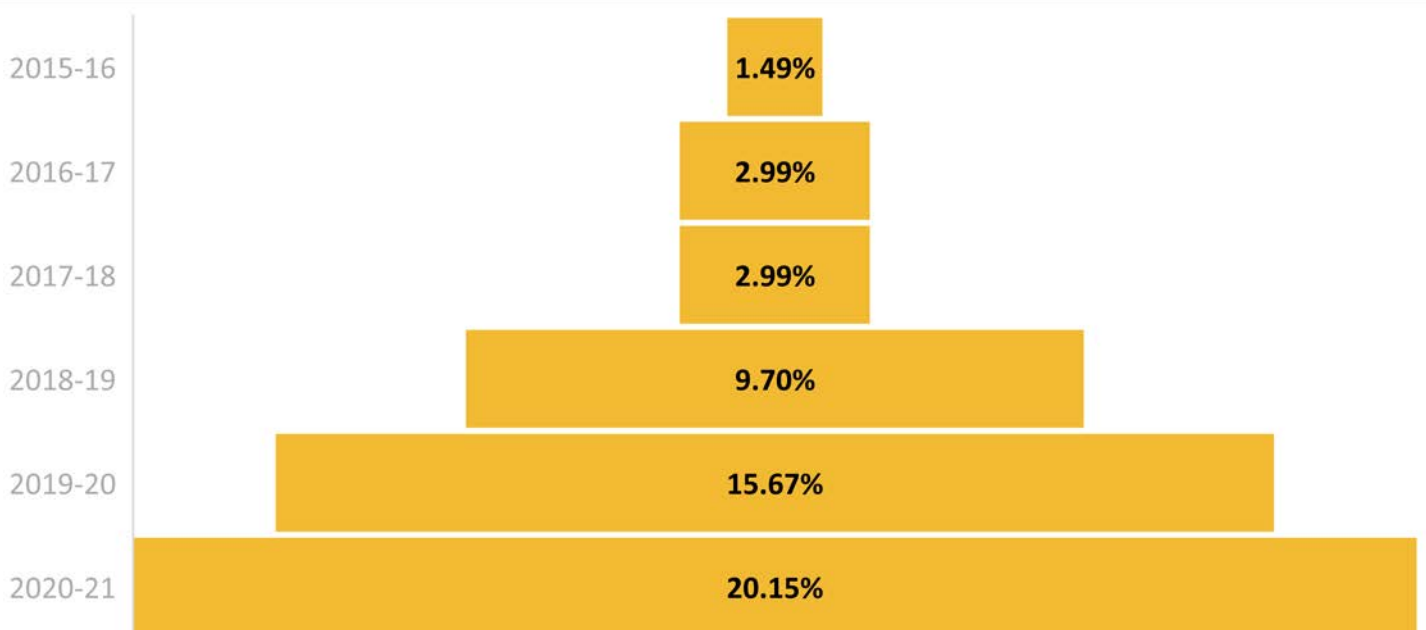
The number of schools in the Capital region that offered the NYSSB rose again in 2020-21 to 27 schools, as shown in Figure 4.

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



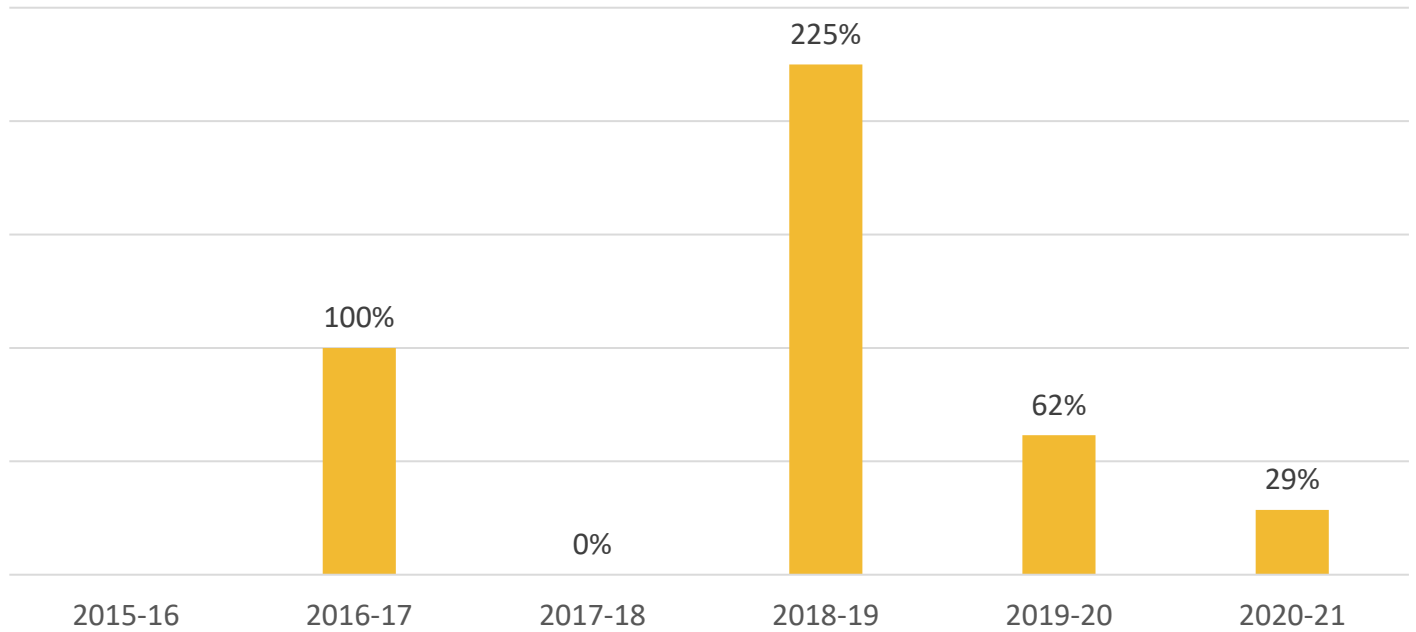
The 27 Capital region schools that offered the NYSSB in 2020-21 represent over 20% of district high schools in the region, or one in every five district high schools. As demonstrated in the chart below, the percentage of schools in the Capital region offering the NYSSB has experienced significant growth from the first year the NYSSB was offered, starting at only 1.49% and growing to 20.15% in five years, as shown in Figure 5.

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



The growth rate in the number of schools offering the NYSSB in the Capital region spiked in the 2018-19 school year, in which the number of schools offering the NYSSB rose by 225%, as shown in Figure 6 below. The growth rate in 2020-21, while still positive, was the smallest one since schools began offering the NYSSB in this region, most likely due to the impact of COVID-19 on instruction.

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

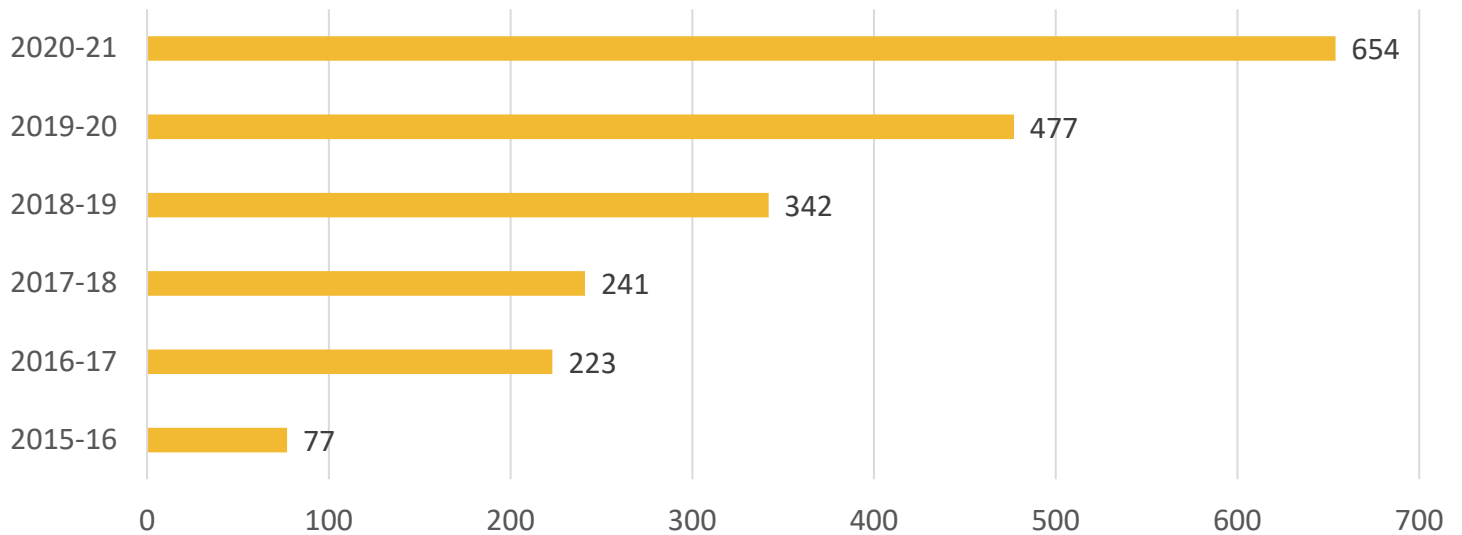


2021 NYSSB graduate from Long Lake High School
(Photo courtesy of Long Lake CSD)

Students Who Earned the NYSSB

The number of students who earned the NYSSB in the Capital region continued to grow in 2020-21 to 654 students, up more than 37% from the prior year, as shown in Figure 7.

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

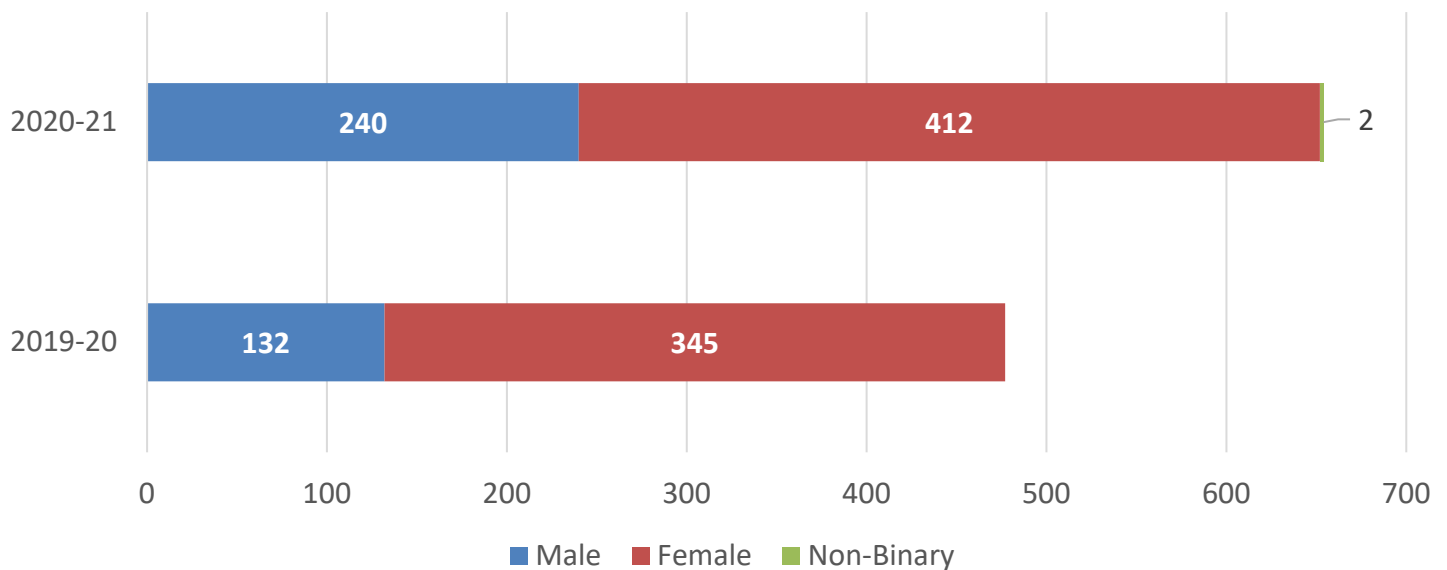


Seal Earners by Gender

The gender make-up of the NYSSB class of 2020-21 from the Capital region changed in multiple ways from the prior year:

- Seal earners who identify as male represented 28% of all NYSSB earners from the region in 2019-20, but rose to 37% in 2020-21, a gain of 9%.
- Seal earners who identify as female represented 72% of all NYSSB earners from the region in 2019-20, but fell to 63%, a loss of 9%.
- 2020-21 was the first year that students pursuing the NYSSB were able to identify as non-binary. A total of two Capital region Seal earners identified in this way in 2020-21.

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



Seal Earners by Race and Ethnicity

When disaggregated by race and ethnicity, the data on Capital region Seal earners shows relatively stable levels of participation by students of different races and ethnicities. Multiracial student participation (2%) in the NYSSB and that of students of Hispanic ethnicity (4%) remained the same from 2019-20 to 2020-21. Gains of 1% were seen in the participation of Asian, Native Hawaiian, or Other Pacific Islander students and Black or African American students, while the participation of White students in the NYSSB fell by 2% in 2020-21. Figures 9 and 10 below show the percentage of Seal Earners in the Capital region by race/ethnicity over the last two years.

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

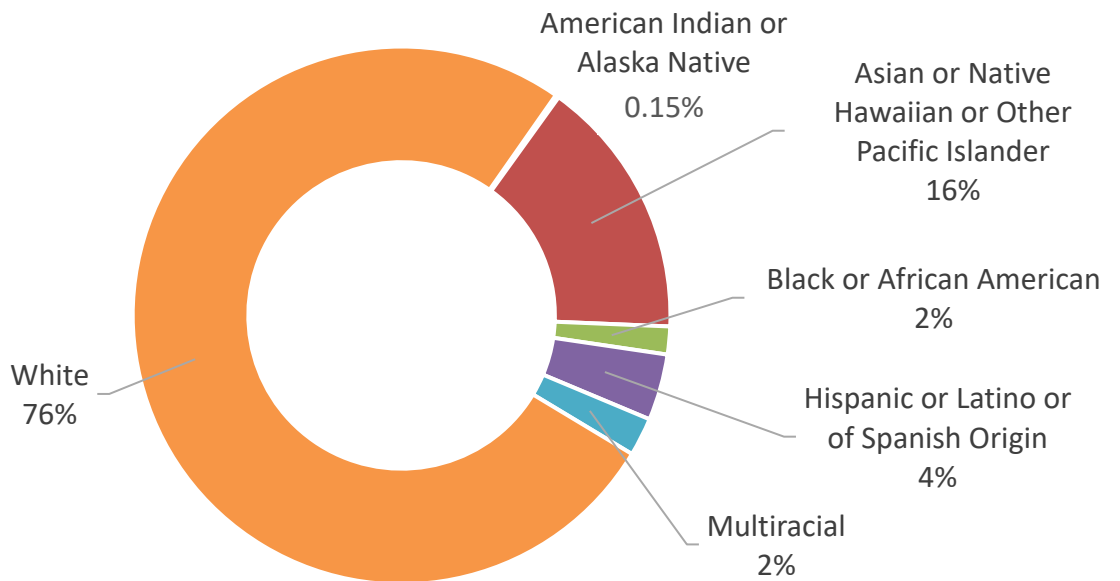
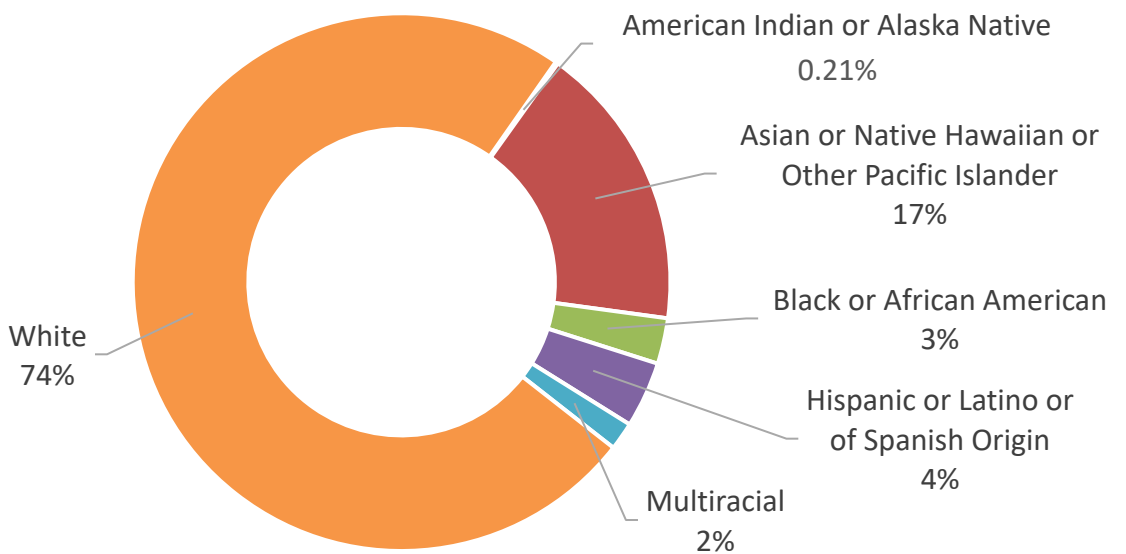


Figure 10. Number of Students Awarded the NYSSB in the Capital Region by Race/Ethnicity (2021)



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 Capital Region by ELL Status (2016-2021)

	ELLs	Ever ELLs	Never ELLs (Home Language = English)	Never ELLs (Home Language = Other Than English)*
2015-16	1	0	76	n/a
2016-17	1	0	222	n/a
2017-18	3	0	237	n/a
2018-19	0	4	338	n/a
2019-20	2	10	465	n/a
2020-21	4	18	578	54
Total	11	32	1,916	54

*In 2020-21, NYSED divided the “Never ELL” subgroup of students into those whose home language is English and those whose home language is 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 Capital 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 a world language studied in school. The participation in the NYSSB among Current ELLs in the Capital region remains very small (ranging from 1 to 4 ELLs per year for the entire region). To increase the number of Current ELLs participating in the NYSSB:

1. More schools in the Capital region are encouraged to sign on to offer the NYSSB. Only one in every five district high schools offered the NYSSB 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 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.

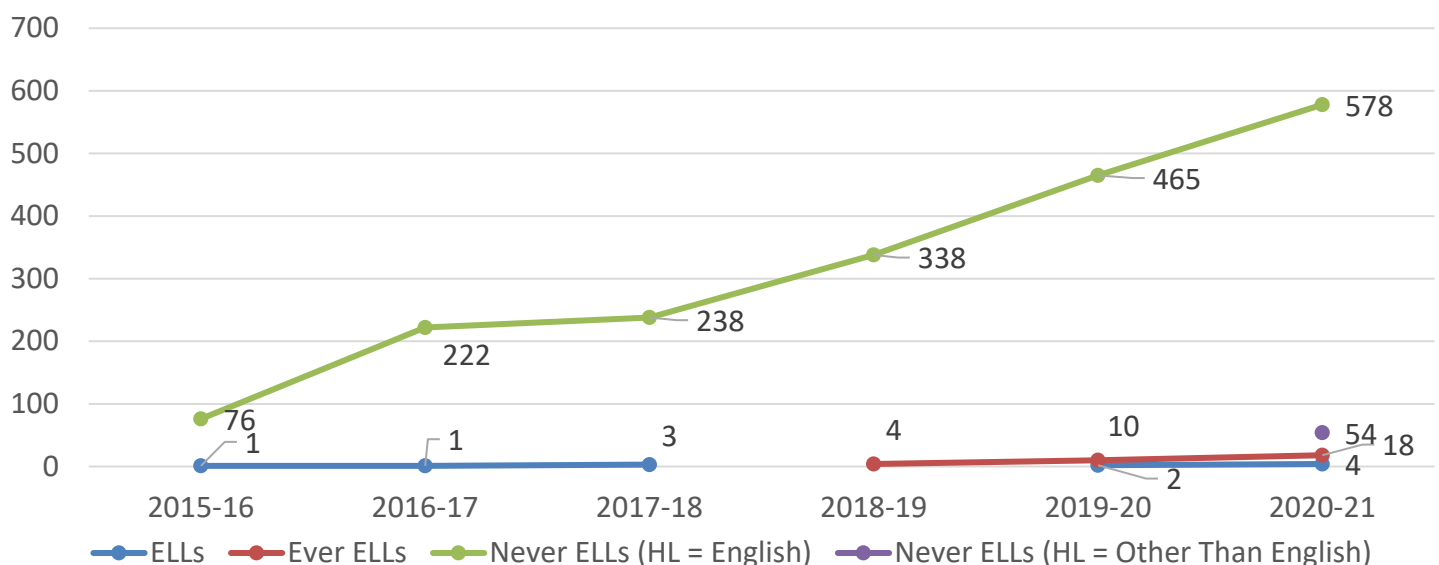
- Schools offering the NYSSB are encouraged to develop a network of adults among their staff and within their communities that are qualified speakers of other languages, focusing on the languages spoken by their Current and Ever ELLs, so as to support the participation in the NYSSB by these students. 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 ELLs was non-existent in the Capital region for the first three years of the NYSSB (2016-2018). Following that, participation in the NYSSB by Ever ELLs has more than quadrupled from four Seal earners to 18 in 2020-21. This may suggest a learning curve for schools offering the NYSSB as they develop systems to identify Ever ELLs, who may have tested out of ELL status earlier in their academic careers, as well as systems to support such students earning the NYSSB in their home languages, which may not be among the languages taught within the school.

Never ELLs whose home language is English have historically represented the vast majority of Seal earners, not only within the Capital region, but across New York State. This population of Seal earners has shown the most drastic growth within the region, from 76 Seal earners in the first year the NYSSB was offered to 578 in 2020-21, a growth rate of 760% over five years. It is likely that Never ELLs whose home language is English is the most easily identifiable student subgroup, 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 the 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 may face challenges in identifying these students as potential NYSSB applicants since they are not identified as ELLs and may speak a language that is not taught in their schools. In the Capital region, there were 54 Never ELLs whose home language (HL) is other than English in 2020-21.

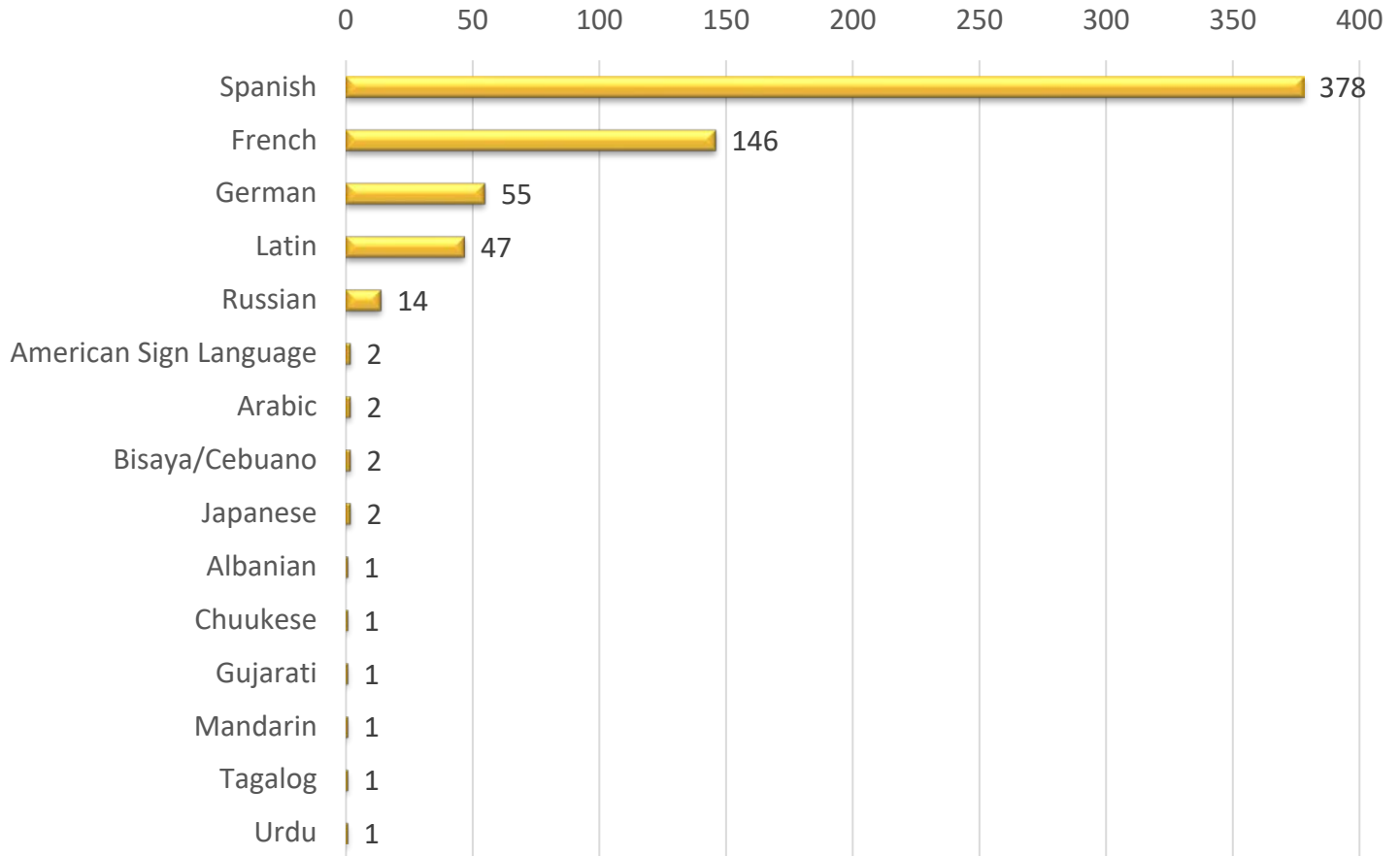
Figure 11. Number of Students Who Earned the NYSSB in the Capital Region by ELL Status (2016-2021)



Seal Earners by Language

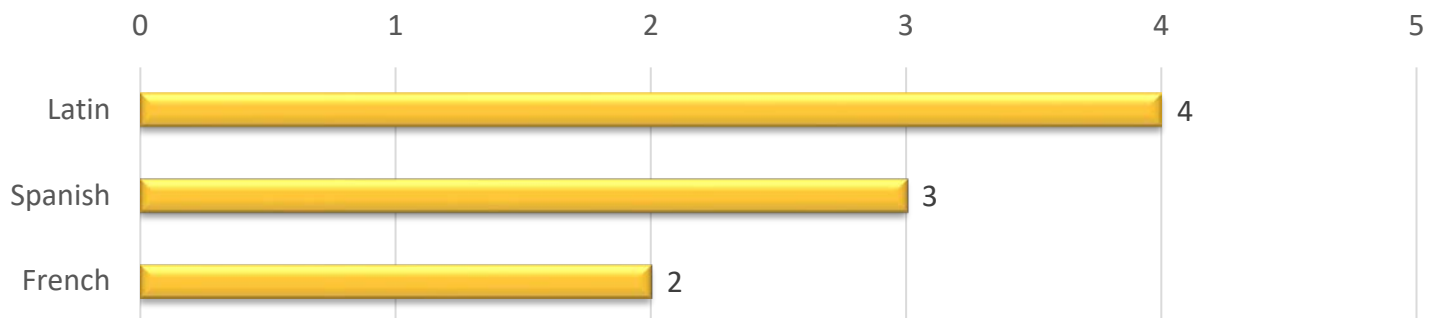
Students from the Capital region earned the NYSSB in Albanian, American Sign Language, Arabic, Bisaya/Cebuano, Chuukese, English, French, German, Gujarati, Japanese, Latin, Mandarin, Russian, Spanish, Tagalog, and Urdu. Figure 12 shows the world languages other than English in which students earned the NYSSB in the Capital region, ranked from most to least frequent.

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



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

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

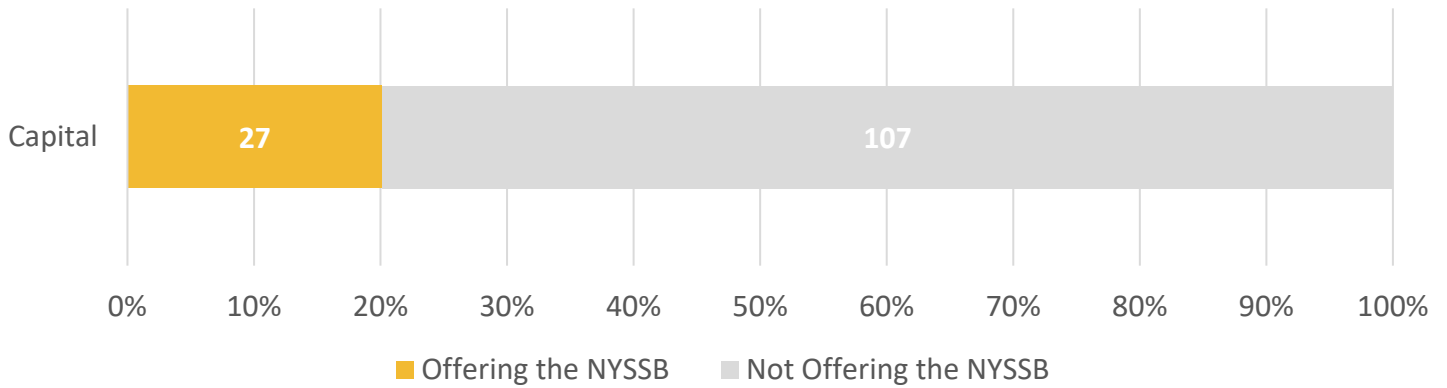


Areas for Potential Growth of the NYSSB in the Capital Region

Schools

There is significant potential for growth within the Capital region, which has 107 district high schools that did not have a NYSSB program as of 2020-21, as shown in Figure 14 below.

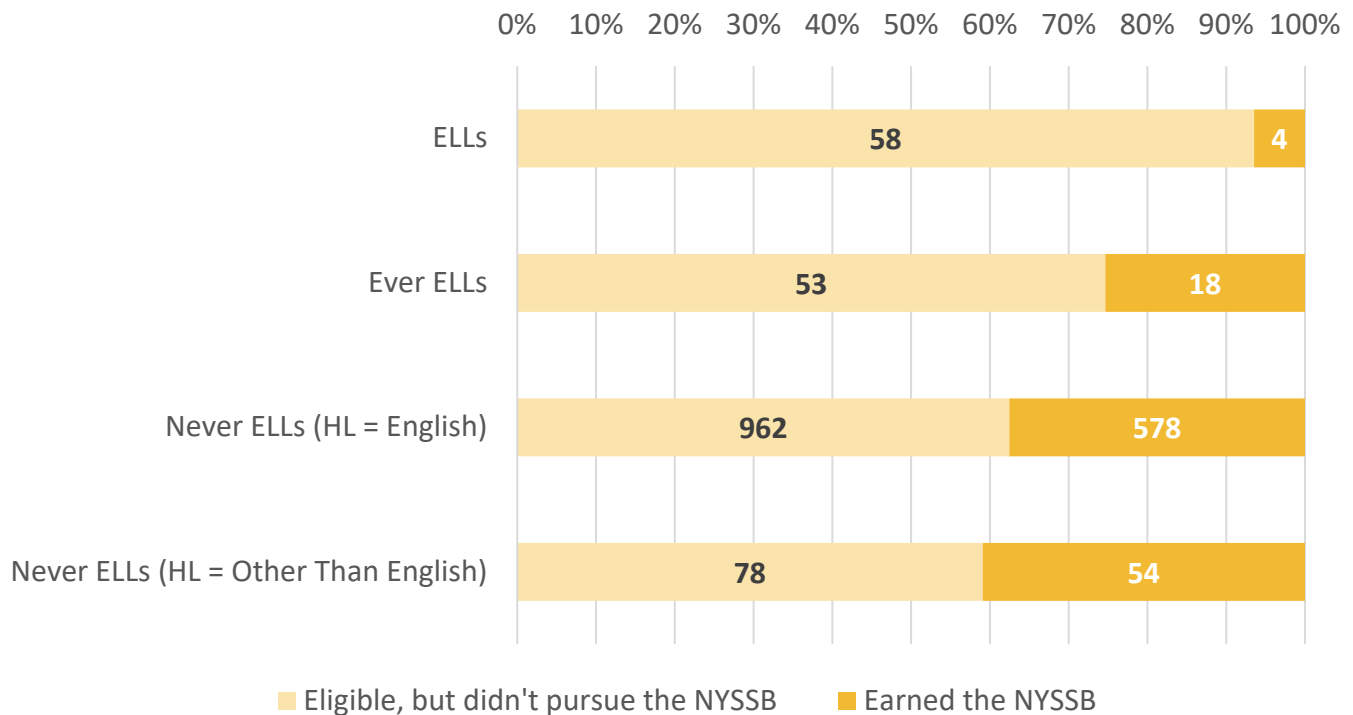
Figure 14. District High Schools in the Capital Region Offering vs. Not Offering the NYSSB (2021)



Students

In the Capital region, as in most regions, the largest group of students earning the NYSSB are Never ELLs whose home language (HL) 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 Capital 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 Capital 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.

List of Figures and Tables

Figures

Figure 1.	Map of New York State by Region with the Capital Region Highlighted.....	4
Figure 2.	Map of New York State by County with BOCES Pinned	4
Figure 3.	Infographic Summary of the NYSSB in the Capital Region (2021).....	5
Figure 4.	Growth in the Number of Capital Region High Schools Offering the NYSSB (2016-2021)	7
Figure 5.	Capital Region NYSSB Schools as a Percentage of Total District High Schools in the Capital Region (2016-2021).....	7
Figure 6.	Percentage of Growth in Number of Schools in the Capital Region Offering the NYSSB (2016- 2021).....	8
Figure 7.	Number of Students Awarded the NYSSB in the Capital Region (2016-2021)	9
Figure 8.	Number of Students Awarded the NYSSB in the Capital Region by Gender (2020-2021).....	9
Figure 9.	Number of Students Awarded the NYSSB in the Capital Region by Race/Ethnicity (2020).....	10
Figure 10.	Number of Students Awarded the NYSSB in the Capital Region by Race/Ethnicity (2021).....	10
Figure 11.	Number of Students Who Earned the NYSSB in the Capital Region by ELL Status (2016-2021)	12
Figure 12.	Number of Students Who Earned the NYSSB in the Capital Region by World Language (2016-2021).....	13
Figure 13.	Number of Students Who Earned the NYSSB in the Capital Region in Two World Languages in Addition to English (2021)	13
Figure 14.	District High Schools in the Capital Region Offering vs. Not Offering the NYSSB (2021)	14
Figure 15.	Seal Earners vs. Eligible Students Not Pursuing the NYSSB in the Capital Region by ELL Status (2021).....	14

Tables

Table 1.	Number of Students Who Earned the NYSSB in the Capital Region by ELL Status (2016-2021).....	11
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References

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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