

Exploration of Assessment Alternatives for Graduation



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Policy Considerations



Board position statement on high school assessments required for graduation (approved in January 2015) options to explore:

1. Tenth grade students taking the high school SBAC (Smarter Balanced Assessment).
2. Earning credit in Bridge To College transition courses.
3. Earning dual credit in specific college-level courses.
4. Completing a Career and Technical Education (CTE) Program of Study or earning an industry certification.
5. Additional assessments as alternatives, including CTE and work-readiness assessments.



Comparable Rigor



Statute requires that the alternative assessments be **“comparable in rigor to the skills and knowledge that students must demonstrate on the statewide student assessment.”** (RCW 28A.655.061.)

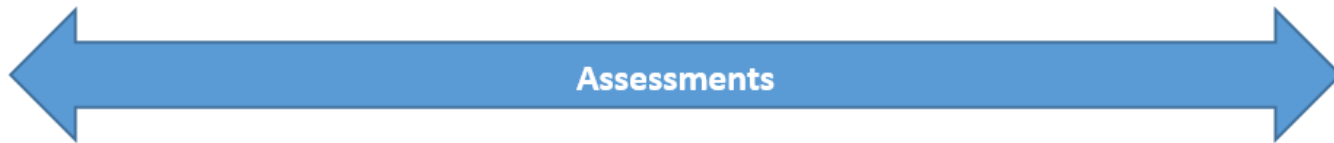


Spectrum of Assessments and Alternatives



No Link to Graduation: No Alternatives

Strong Link to Graduation: Exit Exams



Weaker Link to Math and
ELA Standards

Stronger Link to Math and
ELA Standards



↑
Current System



Current Alternative Assessments:



- Collections of Evidence
- College Entrance Exams
- Grade Comparison
- Out-of-state Tests
- Recent Transfer Waiver
- Special Education Alternatives



Alternatives Options to Explore:



“Comparable Rigor” options:

- Transition Courses/Bridge Courses
- Dual credit courses in English, math



Alternative Options to Explore:



- Work skills assessments.
- CTE programs of study and industry certifications.



CTE Assessments and Industry Certifications

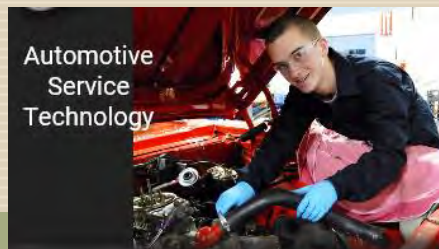


- **Precision Exams**

- ✦ Relatively new.
- ✦ Now being used by more than 50% of districts.
- ✦ Exams available in all 16 Career Clusters.

- **ACT WorkKeys**

- ✦ Applied mathematics.
- ✦ Locating information.
- ✦ Reading for information.



CTE Programs of Study



- **Programs of Study are detailed guides for students that:**
 - ✦ Map out specific course options for a chosen career path from high school through postsecondary education.
 - ✦ Exemplify the importance of career planning, beginning in the freshman year in high school, and even earlier.
- **However Programs of Study:**
 - ✦ Vary greatly between districts.
 - ✦ Do not require a certain number of credits or course type.
 - ✦ Do not focus on the same skills assessed in the SBAC.



Conclusions Related to CTE Options



Stakeholders contacted expressed agreement that:

- That the **CTE options do not meet the ‘comparable rigor’ standard.**
- **Further work and consideration is valuable** to help ensure all students have a variety of alternatives.
- The **High School and Beyond Plan** is a critical component.
- The **development of CTE alternatives is important** if the exit exam process is maintained.



Conclusions Related to CTE Options



Stakeholders contacted expressed agreement that:

- Our **current Career- and College-Ready standard is focused on readiness for college but does not adequately address readiness for careers.**
- **District size will continue to impact students' access to alternatives.**
- While not a focus of our review, all participants made sure that we were aware of the **challenging impact of assessments** on the educational programs in their school systems.



Additional Considerations



- Further work (perhaps looking at a process similar to the development of the “Transition Courses”) to explore assessment alternatives in CTE.
- Research how the College and Career Ready concepts impact student readiness for their futures. Discuss the concept of academic preparation for college as it relates to academic preparation for a career. Utilize the research, as appropriate, in future decision making.



Resources



- Website: www.SBE.wa.gov
- Blog: washingtonSBE.wordpress.com
- Facebook: www.facebook.com/washingtonSBE
- Twitter: www.twitter.com/wa_SBE
- Email: sbe@sbe.wa.gov
- Phone: 360-725-6025

