

The Washington State Board of Education

Governance | Accountability | Achievement | Oversight | Career & College Readiness

Title:	Consideration of a State Board of Education Position Statement: Modifications to the State Assessment System to Support Career and College Readiness	
As Related To:	<input type="checkbox"/> Goal One: Effective and accountable P-13 governance. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Goal Two: Comprehensive statewide K-12 accountability. <input type="checkbox"/> Goal Three: Closing achievement gap.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Goal Four: Strategic oversight of the K-12 system. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Goal Five: Career and college readiness for all students. <input type="checkbox"/> Other
Relevant To Board Roles:	<input type="checkbox"/> Policy Leadership <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> System Oversight <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Advocacy	<input type="checkbox"/> Communication <input type="checkbox"/> Convening and Facilitating
Policy Considerations/ Key Questions:	<p>How will adoption of the Common Core State Assessment and the projected adoption of the Next Generation Science Standards affect the state assessment system? More specific questions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · What is the role of an 11th grade CCSS assessment? · What will be the role of SBE in setting cut scores for CCSS assessments? · What high school assessments should be required for graduation? <p>SBE is authorized by RCW 28A.230.090 to set high school graduation requirements including the certificate of academic achievement and certificate of individual achievement (RCW 28A.230.090 (1)(b)). The Superintendent of Public Instruction is required to consult with SBE on the assessment system (RCW 28A.655.070(3)(a)).</p>	
Possible Board Action:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Review <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adopt <input type="checkbox"/> Approve <input type="checkbox"/> Other	
Materials Included in Packet:	<input type="checkbox"/> Memo <input type="checkbox"/> Graphs / Graphics <input type="checkbox"/> Third-Party Materials <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PowerPoint	
Synopsis:	<p>SBE Assessment Committee leads, Connie Fletcher, Kevin Laverty, Tre' Maxie and Matthew Spencer will review options for changes to the high school assessment system as a result of the implementation of Common Core State Standards.</p>	

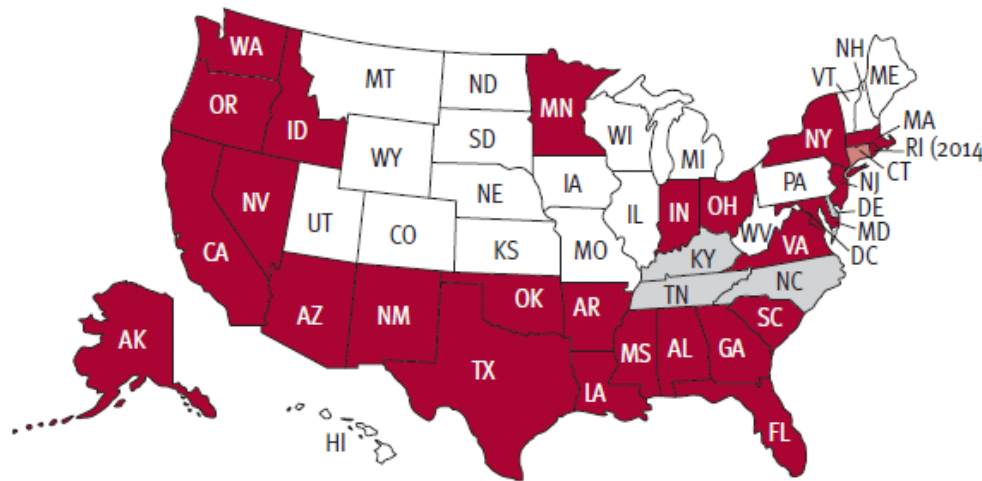
Modifications to the State Assessment System to Support Career and College Readiness for All Students

Context for a Discussion
January 9, 2013

Assessment Committee Members:
Connie Fletcher, Kevin Laverty, Tre' Maxie, Matthew Spencer
Staff: Linda Drake, Senior Policy Analyst

Exams Required for High School Graduation in State Assessment Systems

- Twenty-six states have current or planned exit exam policies
- Sixty-nine percent of the nation's students must pass exit exams to graduate



State has or will implement an exit exam that students must pass to graduate:

AL, AK, AR, AZ, CA, FL, GA, ID, IN, LA, MA, MD, MN, MS, NJ, NV, NM, NY, OH, OK, OR, RI [2014], SC, TX, VA, WA
(26 states)

State has end-of-course tests that students must take, but not necessarily pass, to graduate:

KY, NC, TN (3 states)

State plans to require students to take exam (class of 2020) but has not yet determined whether students must pass exam to graduate:

CT (1 state)

(Center for Education Policy, 2012)



Common Core Assessment Consortia

PARCC

Partnership for the Assessment of College and Careers

- 23 states
- Fixed-form delivery
 - Students take one of several fixed equated sets of items and task, delivered either by paper-and-pencil or by computer
- High school math assessments designed to be end-of course assessments

SBAC

Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium

- 27 States
- Adaptive testing designed for computer delivery
 - Computer software will dynamically adopt test items based on student responses
- Assessments are intended to be summative and comprehensive
 - An optional interim assessment system will make it possible for states to build end-of-course tests

Common Core State Standards and Exit Exams



Twenty-two states:

- Have adopted Common Core State Standards (CCSS), and
- Have exit exams, assessments required for high school graduation

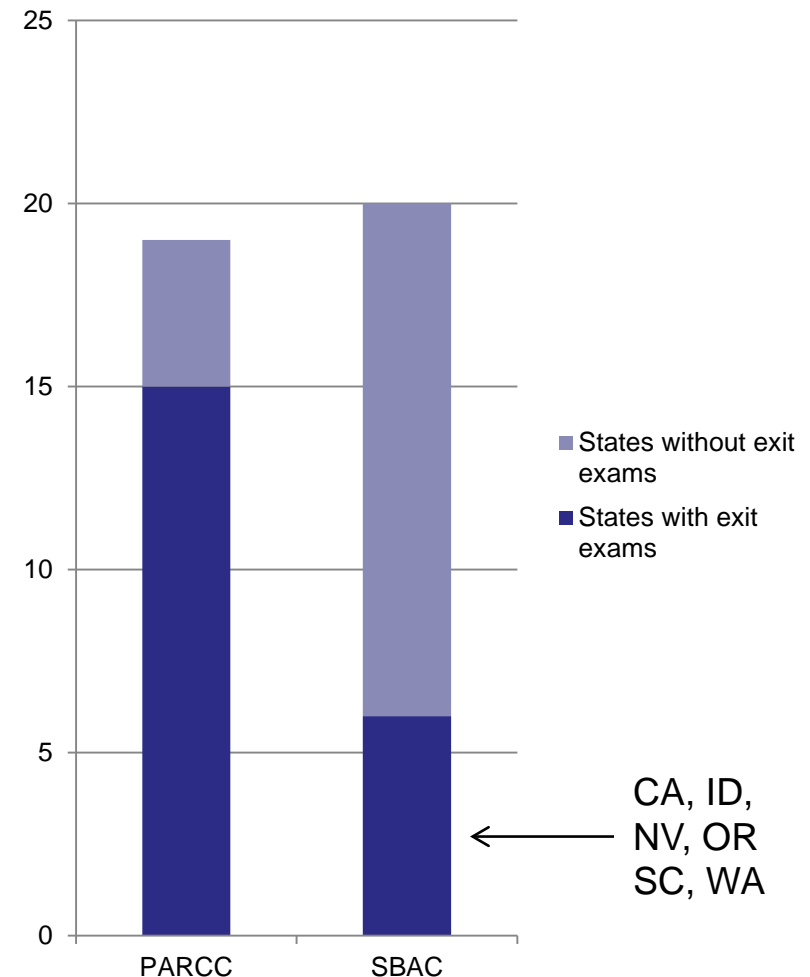
Option	Number of states	States
Plans to replace current exit exams with PARCC assessments	13	Arizona, Arkansas, Florida, Indiana, Louisiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Mississippi, new jersey, New Mexico, Ohio, Oklahoma, Rhode Island
Plans to replace current exit exams in both English language arts and math with SBAC assessments	3	Idaho, Nevada, Oregon
Plans to replace current exit exams with new state assessments align to CCSS	2	Alabama, New York (In New York, either new state assessment or PARCC)
Do not yet know	2	South Carolina, Washington
Plans to continue with current exams	1	California
Phasing out exit exam requirement	1	Georgia

(Center for Education Policy, 2012)

Common Core Assessment Consortia and Exit Exams

Washington shares the situation of requiring exit exams and being a member of SBAC with five other states:

- California
- Idaho
- Nevada
- Oregon
- South Carolina
- Alabama and Pennsylvania have exit exams, but are members of both PARCC and SBAC



SBAC States with Exit Exams



Washington, South Carolina, Nevada, Idaho, California, Oregon

State	Type of exit exam	Grade when typically given	Plans for SBAC (Center for Education Policy Report and state websites)
Washington	Comprehensive reading and writing; EOCs in math and science.	10 th	Not decided.

SBAC States with Exit Exams



Washington, South Carolina, Nevada, Idaho, California, Oregon

State	Type of exit exam	Grade when typically given	Plans for SBAC (Center for Education Policy Report and state websites)
Washington	Comprehensive reading and writing; EOCs in math and science.	10 th	Not decided.
South Carolina	Comprehensive English language arts and math.	10 th	Not decided.
Nevada	Comprehensive math, reading, writing, and science.	10 th	Replace current exams with SBAC.

SBAC States with Exit Exams



Washington, South Carolina, Nevada, Idaho, California, Oregon

State	Type of exit exam	Grade when typically given	Plans for SBAC (Center for Education Policy Report and state websites)
Washington	Comprehensive reading and writing; EOCs in math and science.	10 th	Not decided.
South Carolina	Comprehensive English language arts and math.	10 th	Not decided.
Nevada	Comprehensive math, reading, writing, and science.	10 th	Replace current exams with SBAC.
Idaho	Comprehensive reading, language usage, and math.	10 th	Replace current exams with SBAC, timing yet to be determined.

SBAC States with Exit Exams



Washington, South Carolina, Nevada, Idaho, **California**, Oregon

State	Type of exit exam	Grade when typically given	Plans for SBAC (Center for Education Policy Report and state websites)
California	Comprehensive English language arts and math.	10 th	Continue using current state tests as exit exams; California standards include additional standards to CCSS.

SBAC States with Exit Exams



Washington, South Carolina, Nevada, Idaho, California, **Oregon**

State	Type of exit exam	Grade when typically given	Plans for SBAC (Center for Education Policy Report and state websites)
Oregon	<p>Comprehensive reading and writing in 2013; reading, writing and math in 2014. Assessments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State standards-based assessment; • PSAT, ACT, PLAN, Work Keys, Compass, ASSET, SAT; • or, samples of student work locally scored using state scoring guides. 	11 th	<p>Replace current exams with SBAC. Current high school achievement level will be aligned with the SBAC scoring scale. The achievement level will be held steady during a transition period for the purposes of high school graduation.</p>



Summary

- The transition to CCSS-based assessments presents challenges for all states adopting the new standards, and they have responded in a variety of ways.
- Most states that have adopted CCSS plan on replacing current exit exams in English language arts and math with new assessments aligned to the new standards (PARCC or SBAC).
- No state has specified plans to set CCSS assessment consortia college- and career-readiness achievement levels as required for high school graduation.

Key Discussion Questions (and Assessment Committee discussion leads)

Question 1: Should Washington require students to pass assessments to earn a high school diploma? (5 min., Connie)

Question 2 and 3: Should passage of the 11th grade SBAC be required for a high school diploma? And should the SBE set the cut-score for earning a diploma? (35 min., Kevin)

Question 4: Should we continue to require 10th grade assessments? (20 min., Tre')

Question 5: Should high school science assessment remain only biology EOC? (5 min., Connie)

Question 6: Should students be given the option to demonstrate career readiness as an alternative to required assessments (by earning a career certification or by earning a qualifying score on Work Keys or ASVAB)? (5 min., Kevin)

Question 7: What should the eligibility criteria be for accessing alternative assessments? (5 min., Matthew)

DRAFT State Board of Education Position Statement on High School Assessment and Exit Exams

State Board of Education Assessment Committee: Connie Fletcher, Kevin Laverty, Tre' Maxie, and Matthew Spencer.

January, 2013

With the full implementation of the Common Core State Standards in 2014-2015, a key question facing policymakers is should the 11th grade Smarter Balanced Consortium (SBAC) tests be layered on top of our existing high school assessment system or should they be integrated into a reformed assessment system?

SBE position on high school assessment and exit exams:

- SBE continues to support exit exams that students must pass to earn high school diplomas. SBE finds that exit exams reinforce the teaching and learning of standards and help ensure all students are prepared to succeed in college and careers.
- SBE finds that SBAC assessments delivered adaptively by computer have the potential to preserve instructional time and provide precise and responsive results for students and educators.
- SBE finds that using the 11th grade SBAC test with SBE-determined cut scores as a high school exit exam is consistent with the goal of college- and career-readiness for all students. Cut scores that SBE will identify for SBAC exit exams may be different from the consortium-determined college-ready scores that will be reported for federal accountability. SBE does not believe consortium-determined scores should decide which students in Washington graduate from high school, especially during the first years of implementation of new assessments for graduation. Many other states are considering a similar use of Common Core assessments; 16 of the 25 states that administer exit exams, are planning on replacing state exit exams with SBAC or PARCC (Partnership for the Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers) assessments.
- SBE supports exploring ways for students to demonstrate career skills and career readiness as alternatives to required assessments as part of future assessment systems.
- SBE is concerned with the narrowing of science curricula due to implementing the Biology EOC as an exit exam for all students and supports exploring a broader range of ways that students can be assessed in science.
- SBE recognizes the operational challenges of implementing new standards and new assessments. Some changes will need further study and consideration as the state moves forward with implementation over a period of transition. Using an 11th grade exit exam will impact the schedule of alternative assessments available. SBE encourages further study and consideration of what is logistically possible to maximize options for students.

Washington State Board of Education Assessment Committee Working Paper on High School Assessments and Exit Exams, January 2013

SBE Assessment Committee: Connie Fletcher, Kevin Lavery, Tre' Maxie and Matthew Spencer

Executive Summary

The full implementation of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in the 2014-2015 school year will result in new assessments in English language arts and mathematics. The question facing policymakers is beyond the federally required assessments: what other assessments should be administered in high school? And which of these assessments, if any, should be exit exams required for high school graduation?

In this working paper the SBE Assessment Committee outlines positions on four policy considerations. These positions represent the discussions of the committee and do not represent the official position of the State Board of Education. The policy considerations are:

- Should Washington require that students pass assessments to earn a diploma?
- Should the 11th grade Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) tests be required to earn a diploma?
- Should the high school science assessment remain a 10th grade end-of-course (EOC) exam?
- Should Washington continue early high school assessments in reading, writing, and math?

Should Washington require that students pass assessments to earn a diploma?

The SBE Assessment Committee continues to support exit exams, assessments that students must pass to earn high school diplomas. The SBE Assessment Committee finds that exit exams can reinforce the teaching and learning of standards and help ensure all students are college- and career-ready.

Should the 11th grade SBAC assessments be required to earn a diploma?

Using the 11th grade SBAC assessment as an exit exam is consistent with college- and career-readiness for all students. The SBE Assessment Committee supports using the SBAC assessments as high school graduation requirements with scores that meet graduation standards identified by the SBE, as authorized by Washington law.

Although the ultimate goal is for all students to be college- and career-ready, the cut scores identified for graduation by the SBE may be different from the college-ready scores identified by the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium during a transition period of implementation. The consortium-determined college-ready scores will be reported for the state, since common standards and assessments make no sense across states without common cut scores. However, the SBE Assessment Committee does not believe the consortium-determined scores should decide which students in Washington graduate from high school during the first years of implementation. Furthermore, the SBE Assessment Committee supports exploring ways for students to demonstrate career readiness as a way of meeting graduation requirements.

Should the high school science assessment remain a 10th grade Biology EOC exam?

The SBE Assessment Committee is concerned with the narrowing of science curricula due to implementing the Biology EOC as an exit exam for all students. The SBE Assessment Committee supports the development of additional EOCs, and students could meet standard in science by passing one of several science assessments.

Should Washington continue early high school assessments in reading, writing, and math?

The SBE Assessment Committee supports students and schools having early high school information on whether students are on track for graduation and on track for successful post-secondary education or careers. The SBE Assessment Committee will explore options for providing this information.

Addendum to Executive Summary: Superintendent Randy Dorn has announced his intention to seek legislation on high school assessments. Further information on Superintendent Dorn's proposals may be found at:

<http://www.k12.wa.us/Communications/PressReleases2012/DornProposesChanges-Assessment.aspx>

Washington State Board of Education Assessment Committee Working Paper on High School Assessments and Exit Exams, January 2013

Introduction

The full implementation of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in the 2014-2015 school year will result in new assessments in English language arts and mathematics. Washington is one of 25 member states of the Smarter Balanced Consortium (SBAC) that is developing CCSS-aligned assessments. SBAC members have committed to using 11th grade SBAC comprehensive assessments for federal accountability. In addition, the No Child Left Behind Act requires high school science to be assessed at least once in high school. Therefore, minimally for federal accountability by 2014-2015, high school students will need to take three high school assessments: an 11th grade comprehensive test in English language arts, an 11th grade comprehensive test in math, and a science assessment, which for Washington currently is a Biology end-of-course exam (EOC) (see Table 1).

Table 1 – Exams required for federal accountability and exit exams

Content area	Assessments for federal accountability in 2014-2015	Washington exit exams for the class of 2015 and beyond
English language arts	11 th grade comprehensive SBAC assessment in English language arts	10 th grade comprehensive reading
		10 th grade comprehensive writing
Math	11 th grade comprehensive SBAC assessment in mathematics	Math 1 EOC (algebra 1 or integrated math 1)
		Math 2 EOC (geometry or integrated math 2)
Science	Biology EOC (generally 10 th grade)	

The question facing policymakers such as the legislature, the Superintendent of Public Instruction, and the State Board of Education is beyond the federally required assessments, what other assessments should be administered in high school? And which of these assessments, if any, should be exit exams required for high school graduation?

Under current Washington law the Class of 2015 will need to pass five exit exams to graduate. These exit exams (shown in Table 1) include 10th grade comprehensive reading, 10th grade comprehensive writing, the Biology EOC exam, a first-year math EOC exam, and a second-year math EOC exam. Therefore, another key question facing policy makers is whether to consolidate or to replace some of these exams as we transition to CCSS.

The State Board of Education (SBE) is authorized by law (RCW 28A.230.090) to set high school graduation requirements and to identify the scores that meet standard on statewide assessments (28A.305.130 (4)(b)). In addition, the Superintendent of Public Instruction must consult with the SBE to “maintain, continue to develop and revise a statewide academic assessment system” (RCW 28A.655.070 (3)(a)).

The determination of which high school assessments should be required for system accountability and which high school exit exams should be required for students to earn a diploma are interlocking issues that engage comprehensive aspects of the SBE's role in the state: system oversight, policy leadership, and advocacy for student success.

In this working paper the SBE Assessment Committee outlines its position on four policy considerations. These positions represent the discussions of the committee and do not represent the official position of the State Board of Education. The policy considerations are:

- Should Washington require that students pass assessments to earn a diploma?
- Should the 11th grade SBAC assessments be required to earn a diploma?
- Should the high school science assessment remain a 10th grade EOC exam?
- Should Washington continue to require early high school assessments in reading, writing, and math?

Should Washington require that students pass assessments to earn a diploma?

Policy position

The SBE Assessment Committee continues to support exit exams, assessments that students must pass to earn a high school diploma. The SBE Assessment Committee finds that exit exams can reinforce the teaching and learning of standards and help ensure all students are college- and career-ready.

Background

The Washington Class of 2008 was the first class required to pass comprehensive state exit exams in reading and writing. Twenty-six states will require exit exams by 2014, a number that has increased from 18 states in 2002. The recent increase in exit exams has generally grown out of standards-based education reforms, as well as the accountability requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act (Center on Education Policy, 2002). The primary reasons given for the requirements are to make the high school diploma more meaningful and to assess mastery of state standards and curricula.

While the use of exit exams has increased, there is not a consensus on their value. Critics of exit exams argue that the tests disproportionately impact some student groups, could increase dropout rates, and narrow curricula to only what is tested. Recently, four states have decided to phase out their exit exam requirement: North Carolina, Tennessee, Alabama, and Georgia. In view of the changes engendered by the adoption of the CCSS, it seems timely to revisit this policy.

Data and research on exit exams yield mixed conclusions. According to the Center for Education Policy (September, 2012), “the impacts of exit exams on student achievement, dropout rates, and other outcomes for historically lower-performing groups are not fully known and have yet to be fully addressed.”

Overall, state exit exam requirements have not been correlated to higher dropout rates in those states; however, detailed studies have shown varied impacts. New Jersey students who barely failed an exit exam were somewhat more likely to dropout than students who barely passed (Ou, 2009), while a study of Texas data showed that failing an exit exam did not cause student to dropout early, but was associated with reduced post-secondary attainment (Martorell, 2004).

Bishop and Mane (2004) examined a range of educational policies using international data and concluded that curriculum-based external exit exams combined with higher academic course requirements was the only policy combination studied that resulted in higher achievement for all students and a reduction of the achievement gap. Fuller and Johnson (2001) studied the impact of the state accountability system on children of color and children from low-income homes and found that “the state accountability system can drive improvements in school performance for children of color and children from low-income homes.” They further argued that the power of the system was tied less to the structure of the tests than to “the structure of the rating system, the use of disaggregated data, and the mandate that districts get substantial percentages of each demographic group of students to achieve state expectations.”

Both participation rates on high school assessments and the achievement levels attained by students on the assessments are likely to be increased due to the assessments being required for graduation. A study by The College Board found students are motivated to perform higher on tests for which there are consequences (Liu, 2012). Assessments used for accountability need to have meaning for

students, so that students show up and do their best work. High school assessments that are required for graduation serve as an incentive to students to perform well and as an incentive to the education system to develop quality assessments that are well aligned with teaching and learning.

Summary

The SBE Assessment Committee finds the most substantial arguments in favor of continuing the use of exit exams in the state is the role of the exams in reinforcing the teaching and learning of standards and in helping to ensure all students are college- and career-ready. The use of tests required for academic advancement is an accepted practice nationally and internationally. Although there is a lack of a consensus of research linking exit exams to improved student achievement, assessments that are graduation requirements clearly can be tools for increasing student and school performance. The SBE Assessment Committee supports continuing high school assessments that students are required to pass to earn high school diplomas.

Should the 11th grade SBAC assessment be used as an exit exam?

Policy position

Using the 11th grade SBAC assessment as an exit exam is consistent with college- and career-readiness for all students. The SBE Assessment Committee supports using the SBAC assessments as high school graduation requirements with scores that meet graduation standards identified by the SBE, as authorized by Washington law. Although the ultimate goal is for all students to be college- and career-ready, the scores identified for graduation by the SBE may be different from the college-ready scores identified by the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium. The consortium-determined college-ready scores will be reported for Washington, since common standards and assessments make no sense without common cut scores. However, the SBE Assessment Committee does not believe the consortium-determined scores should decide which students in Washington graduate from high school. Furthermore, the SBE Assessment Committee supports exploring ways for students to demonstrate career-readiness as a way of meeting graduation requirements.

Background

Currently in Washington, 9th through 12th grade students take assessments for graduation, with most students meeting the requirements by the end of 10th grade. Reading and writing are administered to students in 10th grade; most students take the Math1 EOC in the 9th grade and the Math2 EOC and Biology EOC in the 10th grade. For comparison, Table 2 shows the grade level of states' comprehensive exit exams.

Two advantages to students sitting for exit exams early in their high school careers are that there are multiple chances for retaking the exam if they are not successful, and there is sufficient time for remediation. A disadvantage to early-high-school exit exams is that by necessity, the exam must assess early high school content.

Table 2 – Grade level of states' exit exams (Center on Education Policy, 2012)

Grade level of comprehensive exit exams	Number of states	Which states
10 th grade	11	Alaska, Arizona, California, Florida, Idaho, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Ohio, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Washington
11 th grade	7	Alabama, Georgia, Minnesota, New Jersey, New Mexico, Oregon, Texas
12 th grade	1	Nevada

While most states currently have their exit exams at a 10th grade level, there are indications this is changing. For some states, 10th grade assessments grew out of reform movements of the 1970's minimum competency tests. More recently the stated purpose of the tests is as an indicator of college- and career-readiness. Tenth grade assessments made sense for minimum competency tests, but tests scaled to the educational level of a typical 16-year-old no longer work as well for assessments intended to indicate readiness for post-secondary education and work. The shift away from minimum competency towards college- and career-readiness is reflected in states' plans for using CCSS assessments (shown in Table 3). Sixteen states plan on using CCSS consortia (PARCC

and SBAC) assessments as high school exit exams, shifting exit exams to college and career standards and to a higher grade and academic level.

Table 3 – How states plan on using CCSS assessments (Center on Education Policy, 2012)

Option	Number of states	Which states
Plans to replace current exit exams with PARCC assessments	13	Arizona, Arkansas, Florida, Indiana, Louisiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Mississippi, new jersey, New Mexico, Ohio, Oklahoma, Rhode Island
Plans to replace current exit exams in both English language arts and math with SBAC assessments	3	Idaho, Nevada, Oregon
Plans to replace current exit exams with new state assessments align to CCSS	2	Alabama, New York (In New York, either new state assessment or PARCC)
Do not yet know	2	South Carolina, Washington
Plans to continue with current exams	1	California
Phasing out exit exam requirement	1	Georgia

Other exams intended to assess postsecondary success, for example the SAT and ACT, are generally taken by students at the end of their junior year or beginning of their senior year. These tests are used by institutes of higher education for admissions requirements. Colleges and universities value the information provided by these 11th and 12th grade tests, and are likely to see test results of older students at more advanced levels of high school education to be better indications of post-high school success than tests administered to younger students. If Washington state high school exit exams were recognized by institutions of higher education as indicators of post-high school success it would help students and parent recognize the link between high school achievement and post-secondary success.

Would an 11th grade test allow sufficient time for struggling students to receive remediation and retake the exam? The SBAC assessment will be a computer-adaptive test with items scored by computer combined with some performance tasks that are educator-scored. The consortium expects test results to be available within two weeks after students complete a test. With such swift scoring results (compared to three to four months currently) it will be possible for students to retake the test before the end of the school year. An 11th grade student who fails the exam twice at the end of his or her junior year would have senior year to remediate and retake the exam. Such students may enroll in collection of evidence classes. Data on pass rates for collections of evidence suggest that the approach may be effective in both remediating students so they are successful in retaking the assessment and in demonstrating the meeting of standards through evaluation of their evidence portfolios. Ideally, students who are not successful in an 11th grade exit exam would engage in remediation activities during their senior year and retake the exit exam their senior year. If a student fails the assessment as a senior there should be an alternate assessment available, such as a collection of evidence portfolio that could be scored in time for the student to be able to graduate on-time if he or she is successful in demonstrating meeting standards through alternate assessment.

Summary

The SBE Assessment Committee recommends transitioning towards using the 11th grade SBAC assessment in English language arts and math as exit exams. College- and career-readiness should be an underlying objective of the high school assessment system. The adoption of the CCSS supports this objective, and the use of SBAC assessments as exit exams would be another piece of the scaffolding.

While 11th grade exit exams leave less time for remediation, the SBE Assessment Committee advocates a system that would support students before and after the exam to provide sufficient preparation, adequate remediation, and opportunities for retaking. Alternate assessments options, including collections of evidence, should remain available to seniors who are not successful in passing exit exams by the end of their 11th grade year. Students who pursue collection of evidence should retake the exam before collections are scored, to take advantage of the remediation value of collections of evidence prior to the scoring process.

The SBE Assessment Committee also recommends exploring options for career-readiness assessments that could meet graduation requirements. The SBE Assessment Committee affirms that college-readiness is an excellent basis for career preparation and readiness. However, the CCSS are academic standards and may not describe many areas of career skills.

The cut scores that the SBE will determine for high school graduation may not be the same as the consortium-determined scores for college- and career-readiness, although college- and career-readiness remain the goals for all students. The SBE Assessment Committee supports reporting pass rates using consortium-determined scores for federal accountability, but not necessarily for determining which Washington high school students earn diplomas.

Should the high school science assessment remain a 10th grade Biology EOC exam?

Policy position

The SBE Assessment Committee is concerned with the narrowing of science curricula by limiting EOC implementation just to a Biology EOC. The SBE Assessment Committee supports the development of additional EOCs or use of other assessments, such as the SAT subject test. The Committee also supports students meeting standard in science by passing one of several science assessments.

Background

In 2011 the Washington legislature passed ESHB 1410, which set the exit exam for science for the Class of 2015 and beyond as an EOC in Biology. Biology was chosen as the science exit exam content area because enrollment patterns shows that over 93% of high school students took biology during their high school careers (OSPI, 2010), so making it a requirement would minimize the impact on students and schools. ESHB 1410 also directed OSPI to develop additional EOCs when directed by the legislature.

SBE played a role in the development of an assessment system that included EOCs in math and science by conducting studies on the impact of EOCs:

- *The Role of Statewide End-of-Course Assessments in High School Assessment Systems: A Study for the Washington State Board of Education*, prepared by Education First Consulting, LLC, January 2008

This study addressed the central question “how well do comprehensive and EOC assessments meet the major purposes of high school assessments?” The four major purposes identified were 1) supporting student learning, 2) holding students and/or schools accountable, 3) determining readiness for post-secondary education, and 4) ensuring quality and efficient operations. The study found EOCs and comprehensive assessments each had advantages in different areas.

If, for example, Washington leaders want the high school assessment system to ensure greater consistency and bring teaching and learning more closely in line with statewide standards, then EOC assessments are probably better suited to serve this goal. If state leaders instead place a higher priority on preserving simplicity and minimizing complexity in the testing system, then continuing to use the WASL as the state's high school assessment is more appropriate.

- *Implications of Using Science End-of-Course Assessments for High School Exit Exams: A Briefing Paper*, prepared by David Heil & Associates, Inc., October 2008

This study examined EOCs in the context of new state science standards that were being developed at the time of the study and were adopted in 2009.

Implementation of a comprehensive science exit exam will have implications for course sequencing at the high school level. Implementation of science EOC assessment exit exams will likely narrow the range of course options statewide, but clarify the specific content and performance expectations covered by those courses.

Washington State K-12 Science Learning Standards were adopted in 2009. Washington is also a member of a consortium working to develop the Next Generation Science Standards, which could be adopted and implemented as early as 2016-2017, but more likely in 2017-2018.

In December, 2010, OSPI submitted a report to the legislature: *High School Science End-of-Course Assessment Recommendations*. This report reviewed the background of science assessment, costs, and additional considerations, and made recommendations. Recommendations included:

- Continue development and implementation of the Biology EOC.
- Delay the science assessment graduation requirement until the Class of 2017.
- Develop and phase in two additional EOCs in physical science and integrated science.
- Require students in the Class of 2018 and beyond to meet standard in science by passing the Biology EOC or an additional EOC or alternative.

Summary

Keeping biology as the only high school science assessment and exit exam does not align with the objective of an assessment system that reinforces teaching and learning of standards, since the high school science standards are much broader than biology alone. The SBE Assessment Committee is concerned about schools overly focusing on a biology science curriculum. The SBE encourages exploration of the use of additional science assessments for students to meet standard in science.

Should Washington continue early high school assessments in reading, writing, and math?

Policy Position

The SBE Assessment Committee supports students and schools having early high school information on whether students are on track for graduation and post-secondary education or careers.

Background

If 11th grade SBAC exams become high school exit exams required for graduation, what should be the role of early high school exams, if any? Without early high school testing, students would have no state tests between 8th grade and 11th grade and there would be no state tests to help identify students who would need early extra support to succeed on an 11th grade exit exam. Schools and districts could choose locally to test students in early high school, but without state standardized testing during these years there would be no data for comparison with other schools and districts, and state assessment student growth data would not be possible.

Should the current tests in reading, writing, first year high school math, and second year high school math be retained? Any current tests that are retained once the Common Core State Standards are fully implemented in 2014-2015 will need to be aligned with the new standards.

The 11th grade SBAC exams will be comprehensive exams. Does it make sense to create comprehensive tests in 10th grade to correspond to the 11th grade tests?

Table 4 describes options for early high school assessments.

Table 4 – Options for early high school exams

Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4
Eliminate all early high school state tests.	Retain all early high school tests: reading, writing, Math1 EOC, Math2 EOC.	Retain the mathematics EOCs, and combine reading and writing into one English language arts exam.	Create comprehensive 10 th grade English language arts and mathematics exams.

Summary

The SBE Assessment Committee supports further exploration of the implications of continuing or eliminating some or all early high school assessments.

References

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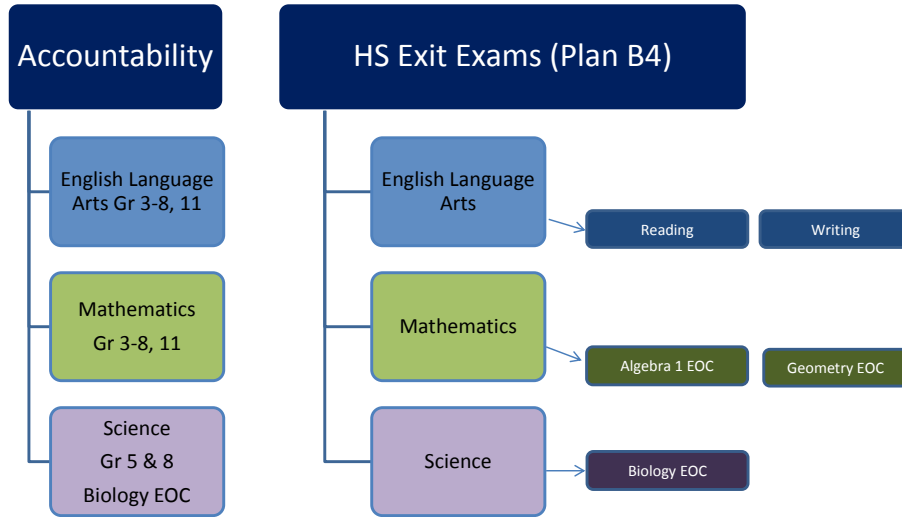
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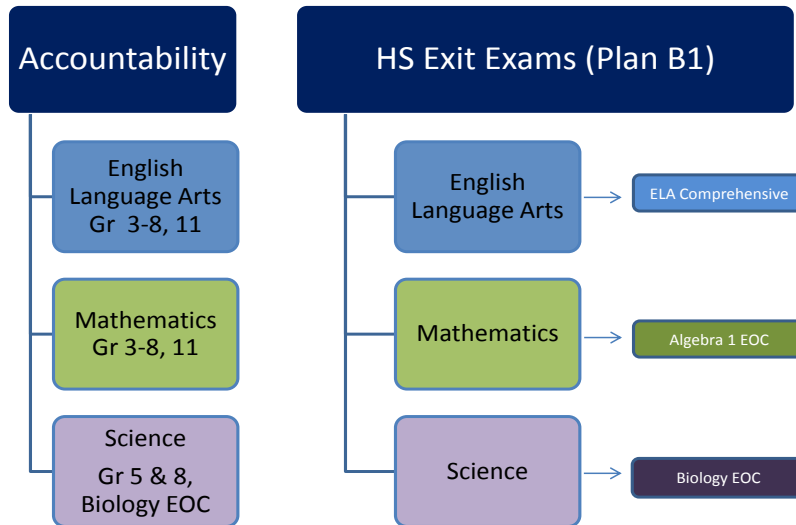
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(Graphics from Alan Burke's PowerPoint to the SBE, November 2012)

If no new legislation:



Superintendent Dorn's proposal:



Dorn Proposes Changes in State Assessment System

New learning standards provide an opportunity for Washington state to streamline high school exit exams

OLYMPIA (December 13, 2012) — Washington state needs “exit” exams to ensure that every student who receives a diploma — no matter where he or she went to school — has the knowledge and skills expected of high school graduates. Students in the Class of 2012 were required to pass two exit exams. By the time this year’s 10th graders graduate, it will be five. State Superintendent Randy Dorn supports testing, but feels that five is too many and too expensive. He will propose that the Legislature reduce that number.

The cost of the state assessment system is high, both in terms of time and money. Exit exams are estimated to be \$30 each. If students don’t pass one or more of these exams, the state provides other ways for students to demonstrate their abilities, such as the Collection of Evidence (COE). The COE is a portfolio of classroom work prepared by the student with instructional support from a teacher. The COE is currently \$400 per student in each content area.

Testing is important, but *over*-testing creates a system in which too much classroom time is devoted to preparing for tests, taking tests and preparing to re-take tests or moving to alternatives when students fail to pass.

Washington is in the midst of changing its standards in math and English language arts with the implementation of the [Common Core State Standards](#). This provides an opportunity to take a look at our assessment system and make some commonsense changes without reducing accountability or lowering standards.

Students in the class of 2015 are required to pass five exit exams to graduate from high school:

1. Reading High School Proficiency Exam (HSPE)
2. Writing HSPE
3. Biology End-of-Course (EOC) exam
4. Algebra I EOC
5. Geometry EOC

In January, Dorn will propose to the Legislature that we reduce the *five* required tests to *three*:

1. Reading/writing HSPE
2. Biology EOC
3. Algebra I EOC

Table 2: Estimated testing times for Smarter Balanced summative assessments

Test Type	Grades	CAT	Perf Task	Total	In-Class Activity	Total	Current Test Times
English Language Arts/Literacy	3-5	1:30	2:00	3:30	:30	4:00	1:30 (Gr 3, 5) 5:30 (Gr 4)
	6-8	1:30	2:00	3:30	:30	4:00	1:50 (Gr 6, 8) 5:50 (Gr 7)
	11	2:00	2:00	4:00	:30	4:30	6:00 (Gr 10)
Mathematics	3-5	1:30	1:00	2:30	:30	3:00	1:30
	6-8	2:00	1:00	3:00	:30	3:30	1:50
	11	2:00	1:30	3:30	:30	4:00	2:00 (per EOC)
COMBINED	3-5	3:00	3:00	6:00	1:00	7:00	3:00 (Gr 3, 5) 7:00 (Gr 4)
	6-8	3:30	3:00	6:30	1:00	7:30	3:40 (Gr 6, 8) 7:40 (Gr 7)
	11	4:00	3:30	7:30	1:00	8:30	8:00 (Gr 10)

Times are estimates of test length for most students. Smarter Balanced assessments are designed as untimed tests; some students may need and should be afforded more time than shown in this table.

Class of :	9 th grade year	10 th grade year	11 th grade year	exit exams	observations	standards
2013 (current Seniors)	2009-10	math 1 EOC or math 2 EOC, reading HSPE, writing HSPE	2011-12	one math EOC or math HSPE	"First graduating class to have to pass a math EOC to graduate."	WA standards
				writing HSPE		
				reading HSPE		
2014 (current Juniors)	2010-11 math 1 EOC	2011-12 math 2 EOC, reading HSPE, writing HSPE, biology EOC	2012-13 Some students will take SBAC pilots	same as above	"First graduating class to pilot the SBAC 11th Grade Test"	WA standards
2015 (current Sophomores)	2011-12 same as above	2012-13 same as above	2012-2014 same as above	two math EOCs	"First class with 2 math EOCs, and Biology EOC grad requirement"	WA standards
				reading HSPE		
				writing HSPE		
				biology EOC		
2016 (current Freshmen)	2012-13 same as above	2013-14 same as above	2014-15 SBAC	same as above	"First class to take 11th grade SBAC Test"	WA standards
2017 (current 8th graders)	2013-14 same as above	2014-15 math 2 EOC, reading, writing all based on CCSS standards, biology EOC	2015-16 SBAC	two math EOCs	"First class to take Common Core Tests for Graduation Req."	CCSS WA
				reading HSPE		
				writing HSPE		
				biology EOC		
2018 (current 7th graders)	2014-15 math 1 EOC based on CCSS standards	2015-16 same as above	2016-17 SBAC Earliest implementation of Next Generation Science Standards	New requirements with SBAC? (would require new legislation in 2014) biology EOC	"First opportunity to switch grad requirement tests to SBAC tests"	CCSS WA
2019 (current 6th graders)	2015-16 same as above	2016-17 Earliest implementation of Next Generation Science Standards	2017-18 SBAC delivery by computer only Earliest Next Generation Science assessment	SBAC? Science assessment?	"Earliest possible implementation of Next Gen Science Standards"	CCSS and Next Generation
2020 (current 5th graders)	2016-17 Earliest implementation of Next Generation Science Standards	2017-18 Earliest Next Generation Science assessment	2018-19 SBAC Next Generation Science Assessment	New requirements based on Next Generation? (2016 for new legislation if required)	"Earliest possible implementation of Next Gen Science Standards assessment"	CCSS and Next Generation