



THE WASHINGTON STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

A high-quality education system that prepares all students for college, career, and life.

Position Statement of the State Board of Education Regarding the Benefits of High School Smarter Balanced Assessment Participation During the 2016 Assessment Cycle.

Today, the Board affirms its support for the actions of the Superintendent of Public Instruction to ensure full participation in the high school Smarter Balanced assessment this year.

Although full participation is important to ensure federal compliance, the overriding consideration is the ability to monitor and support the progress of all students, particularly those not on track for a career and college-ready diploma.

In that spirit, the Smarter Balanced assessment serves multiple purposes. In addition to setting a career- and college-ready standard for high school achievement, and informing senior year course-taking choices, this assessment can also save students time and money for college placement. For the first time ever, students who pass can skip costly and time-consuming remedial coursework at the post-secondary level.

It's a major step forward for our state that students are now taking an assessment that is meaningfully connected to the expectations of our post-secondary institutions. We are determined to eliminate the gap between our systems, and the Smarter Balanced assessment is an important step.

The next step is to fully support our students who are not on track for the high bar of career- and college-readiness. Gaps of any size for our students of color, and our low-income students, are unacceptable. The Smarter Balanced assessment helps us understand the size of the gaps we face and help schools identify individual students who are in need of extra help. But widespread assessment refusals obscure those gaps, and eliminate a tool for parents and teachers to identify students in need of extra help. All students and their parents have a right to know whether they are ready for college-level work.

Washington can and should be a leader in career- and college-readiness. We therefore issue the following goals for this next assessment cycle:

- All schools meet the 95% participation requirement on the Smarter Balanced assessment for the 2016 assessment cycle.
- Washington reduces the number of students requiring remedial coursework in post-secondary by 10% this school year.

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