

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

HEARING TYPE: ___X___ ACTION

DATE: January 9-10, 2008

SUBJECT: **END OF COURSE ASSESSMENT STUDY**

SERVICE UNIT: Ms. Edie Harding, Executive Director
 State Board of Education

PRESENTER: Ms. Jennifer Vranek, CEO
 Education First Consulting

BACKGROUND:

Senate Bill ESSB 6023 directed the Washington State Board of Education (SBE) to examine and recommend changes to high school assessments with a limited series of end-of-course (EOC) assessments. The Governor vetoed this provision because she felt that the study should not predetermine that end-of-course assessments would be implemented. She asked the Board to do a study to understand the implementation issues, costs, and lessons learned.

In addition, The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) is directed to request that vendors bidding on its upcoming new testing contract address cost and technical aspects of implementing EOC assessments.

An additional section of the law passed, directs the SBE to examine opportunities for approved alternatives for the CAA assessment system to include one or more standardized norm-referenced student achievement tests and the possible use of reading, writing, or mathematics portions of the ACT ASSET and ACT COMPASS tests and how they relate to state standards. This review will be conducted as a part of this overall study on alternative assessments.

The Board advertised a request for proposals to solicit contractors to conduct the end of course assessment study. Education First Consulting was awarded the contract (for \$53,000) to conduct the study.

The contractor examined three major areas for the end of course assessment study:

1. A thorough review of the primary and secondary literature on EOCs and high school assessment systems and a documentation of what states are using EOCs and norm referenced tests currently, and in what capacity (EOCs in all subject areas, not just those limited to math and science will be explored as well as the purposes);
2. A set of in depth case studies of states with extensive experience implementing EOCs; and
3. A discussion of policy implications for Washington's high school assessment system based on lessons learned from states with EOCs.

In its EOC Charter the Board specifically stated that it wanted to review the strengths and weaknesses, but that it did not have sufficient time to obtain public feedback and review the consultant's study to make recommendations. At the November Board meeting, Board members received an interim report that summarized eight states' EOC programs as well as a literature review of the different kinds of assessments. One of the key findings from that report was that the EOCs vary greatly across states in terms of purpose (accountability, graduation requirement, and standardizing the content tested) as well as the number of assessments used.

At the January Board meeting, Ms. Vranek, from Education First Consulting, will present the report. We will email her report to Board members on January 4, 2008 which is when she will provide it to the SBE office. The Board will be asked to accept the report on January 10th. Board staff plan to meet with Ms. Vranek and interested education stakeholders and OSPI staff to discuss the report's implications on January 18th from 3-5 p.m. at the Board's office.

Copies of the report will be distributed at the meeting.