

SAT Graduation Alternative

Bottom-line: OSPI recommends that for the remainder of the 2016-2017 school year students from the Class of 2017 and earlier apply the existing SAT ELA score that was established in August 2016 as the score to fulfill the ELA assessment requirement. Students in the Class of 2018 and beyond can participate in SAT (with essay), but an ELA graduation alternative threshold score will not be made available until next school year.

Background: Due to SAT's recent shift in testing format, in August 2016 OSPI presented to SBE new recommendations for both SAT ELA and math graduation alternative scores. In creating the recommendations OSPI employed College Board's concordance tables to derive correspondence between the earlier SAT test format and the newly adopted format. OSPI mistakenly interpreted the concordance table elements that would associate with an ELA measure as comparable in deriving a recommended ELA score. Under the earlier format this was the combination of *Critical Reading + Writing*; with the new format it was assumed to be *Evidence-Based Reading + Writing*.

After gaining approval from SBE on the original recommendation, and communicating such to the field, OSPI learned that the *Writing* element of the new test format does not include student performance on an essay. The *Writing* results are from responses to multiple choice questions measuring student knowledge of grammar, punctuation, etc.; there is no measurement of a student's ability to compose and express ideas in a written construct.

As the state's learning standards and regular assessment (Smarter Balanced) place importance on the measure of a student's ability to compose and express ideas in written format, use of the SAT as a graduation alternative should also include this measure. Once made aware of the incorrect assumption in the previously approved SAT ELA score, OSPI contacted College Board to gather more information to assist with reformulating a new recommendation. As of this date, OSPI has determined that, in attempting to restrict the analysis to Washington students only, we do not have a large enough sample size to derive a statistically sound recommendation inclusive of the essay portion of the SAT. OSPI is working with College Board to consider using national data, but the analyses are more involved and will require more time.

Outcome: As we are approximately half way through the 2016-2017 school year, OSPI believes it would be best to proceed with using the existing, previously approved SAT ELA score until a new recommendation can be presented to SBE. The agency recognizes under this protocol that a full measure of the skills associated with ELA are not being measured, but OSPI does not feel that students, who in good faith followed originally published protocols, should be impacted by the circumstance associated with establishing a fully comprehensive SAT ELA score.