



The Washington State Board of Education

An education system where students are engaged in personalized education pathways that prepare them for civic engagement, careers, postsecondary education, and lifelong learning.

ASSESSMENT REPORT UPDATE

Prepared for the November 2019 Board meeting

Background

THE WASHINGTON COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT SYSTEM

For over two decades, state assessments have been part of Washington's K-12 education system. According to state statute:

The legislature finds that a statewide student assessment system should improve and inform classroom instruction, support accountability, and provide useful information to all levels of the educational system, including students, parents, teachers, schools, school districts, and the state. ([RCW 28A.300.041\(1\)](#)).

Recent legislation, [E2SHB 1599](#), replaced the assessment graduation requirement with graduation pathway requirements. Passing an assessment is no longer explicitly a requirement for graduation because students may graduate using a non-assessment pathway. However, meeting the graduation score on the state high school assessment is one of the pathways, and is likely to be the option that many students will use for graduation. High school assessments remain an important indicator to schools, students, and families of readiness for college and for post-high school careers. As the system transitions to pathways for graduation, it may be a communication challenge for the Board and for the system, to emphasize to students and families that high school assessments are useful and meaningful.

Districts are required to administer the assessments, and it is the expectation that students will take state assessments.

In consultation with the state board of education, the superintendent of public instruction shall maintain and continue to develop and revise a statewide academic assessment system in the content areas of reading, writing, mathematics, and science for use in the elementary, middle, and high school years designed to determine if each student has mastered the state learning standards identified in subsection (1) of this section. School districts shall administer the assessments under guidelines adopted by the superintendent of public instruction. ([RCW 28A.655.070\(3\)\(a\)](#)).

As part of the state's School Recognition System, and to meet federal accountability, schools must meet an assessment participation requirement of 95 percent on state assessments.

ROLE OF THE BOARD IN THE ASSESSMENT SYSTEM

Statute assigns both broad responsibilities and specific duties to the State Board of Education (SBE) in the state assessment system. As an example of broad responsibilities, the SBE provides consultation to the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) in the development and maintenance of the assessment system.

In consultation with the state board of education, the superintendent of public instruction shall maintain and continue to develop and revise a statewide academic assessment system in the content areas of reading, writing, mathematics, and science for use in the elementary, middle, and high school years designed to determine if each student has mastered the essential academic learning requirements identified in subsection (1) of this section. (RCW 28A.305.130(3)(a)).

Specific duties of the SBE include setting the scores needed to show proficiency on state assessments, and on assessments used for other graduation pathways.

Identify the scores students must achieve in order to meet the standard on the statewide student assessment, and the SAT or the ACT if used to demonstrate career and college readiness under RCW [28A.655.250](#). The board shall also determine student scores that identify levels of student performance below and beyond the standard. The board shall set such performance standards and levels in consultation with the superintendent of public instruction and after consideration of any recommendations that may be developed by any advisory committees that may be established for this purpose; (RCW 28A.305.130(4)(b)(i)(A)).

Washington statute also states that beginning in 2019, and

Annually thereafter, the superintendent and the state board shall jointly report to the legislature regarding the assessment system...(RCW.28A.300.041(8)).

This annual report is due each December 1.

Update on Annual Assessment Report

State Board of Education staff will work with Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) staff on the annual assessment report, and submit it to the Legislature by December 1. [Past reports](#) submitted jointly with OSPI have included sections that primarily summarized the Board's work on setting scores for meeting standard on state assessments and on assessments used for graduation alternatives, the Board's legislative priorities concerning state assessments during the past year, and the anticipated work of the Board concerning the state assessment system in the following year.

The Board's section of this year's report will describe the Board legislative priorities of 2018-2019 concerning assessments, the work of the Board during 2019 to implement E2SHB 1599's assessment pathways, and describe the work ahead to further implement graduation pathways and support a meaningful assessment system for students and schools.