

Maintenance of Washington Assessment of Student Learning, End-of-Course Assessments, Collection of Evidence System, and Assessment for Some Special Education-Eligible Students, AY

Agency: 350 Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction
Budget Period: 2009-11

Recommendation Summary Text (Short Description):

Superintendent Bergeson requests an update to the maintenance level assumptions to reflect the final contract costs associated with the new re-bid of the Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL), new End-of-Course (EOC) assessments, and alternative assessments for some special education-eligible students and students to meet graduation requirements (collection of evidence or COE).

The contract negotiations for these assessments have been completed. As of mid-October, the contracts are not fully executed. However, the out-year costs are now known and technical adjustments can be made to the Office of Financial Management carry forward assumptions. The total per test price (including the technical adjustments requested here) are \$21.29 in 2009, a similar price to that experienced in 2005 (\$23.61 per test). The price includes the cost of redeveloping our WASL mathematics assessments for grades 3-8 and 10 to conform to new standards required by the Legislature and recently approved by the State Board of Education. In future years, the price includes the cost of developing new assessment items associated with new science standards (again to be developed at the direction of the Legislature).

Fiscal Detail

Operating Expenditures		FY 2010	FY 2011	Total
Washington Assessment of Student Learning	001-01	\$8,008,427	\$9,247,089	\$17,255,644
High School End-of-Course Mathematics Assessments	001-01	\$2,464,168	\$2,719,476	\$5,183,385
Collection of Evidence	001-01	(\$359,022)	(\$279,954)	(\$638,976)
Alternative Special Education Assessment (WAAS)	001-01	\$1,110,785	\$1,096,937	\$2,207,722
Total Cost		\$11,224,358	\$12,783,417	\$24,007,775

Staffing	FY 2010	FY 2011	Annual Avg.
Total FTEs Requested	0	0	0

Package Description

Background

The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction has recently re-bid and finished negotiating the major contracts associated with the Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL), new End-of-Course (EOC) assessments, and alternative assessments for some special education-eligible students and students to meet

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graduation requirements (collection of evidence or COE). When OFM set the carry forward level of the contracts, the out-year price was not known. Now that negotiations are complete, we know the cost of the contracts to implement current assessment law and policies.

The maintenance level request of this package includes the new requirements of the 2008 Legislature:

- create new versions of the Braille assessments;
- prepare translations of assessments and/or assessment glossaries in at least six languages;
- re-develop the mathematics and science assessments to reflect new state learning standards (as adopted by the State Board of Education) by writing new items aligned to the standards;
- shorten the WASL in reading and mathematics, grades 3-8, and;
- implement End-of-Course assessments for high school mathematics.

Proposed Solution

Fund the maintenance level request included here.

The WASL per test price, inclusive of the maintenance level adjustments, is \$21.29 in 2009, \$24.05 in 2010, and \$24.71 in 2011. These costs are consistent with the costs incurred in 2005 at \$23.61 per test, also a time of heavy item development.

The price for the alternative assessment for some special education students assumes that the state continues to assess students with a portfolio process. OSPI is reviewing options for the WAAS that, subject to approval by the U.S. Department of Education, would substantially reduce costs in the upcoming biennium. The agency will work with policymaker staff as these options are developed to be considered for a policy adjustment during the 2009 session, resulting in a reduction from this maintenance level request.

Contact person

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Narrative Justification and Impact Statement

What specific performance outcomes does the agency expect?

The state assessment system drives the state's ability to identify if our investment of \$9.3 billion in state, federal and local funds (2007-08 school year) is improving student achievement of state learning standards and whether or not the achievement improvement is apparent across ethnic and income strata or confined to white upper-income students.

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Our ability to reward achievement, and identify areas of needed improvement, is dependent on our administration of a rigorous assessment aligned to state standards. About half of the twenty assessments are required by Congress.

Performance Measure Detail

Is this decision package essential to implement a strategy identified in the agency's strategic plan?

This request is integral to our ability to measure progress on most of the performance measures of the agency strategic plan and to measure progress of our education system.

Reason for change:

The funding adjustment is necessary as a result of finishing negotiations of a five-year contract for administration of the WASL and other assessment components.

Does this decision package provide essential support to one of the Governor's priorities?

Yes, the Governor has placed a high emphasis on student achievement; the assessment system is the primary vehicle to measuring whether or not student achievement is improving.

Does this decision package make key contributions to statewide results? Would it rate as a high priority in the Priorities of Government process?

The Priorities of Government (POG) process begins with analysis of state and federal requirements that drive costs. This package is responsive to new state requirements for an improved assessment. Further, improving student achievement has been historically highly valued in the POG process; the WASL is the basis for evaluating the success of that measure and priority.

What are the other important connections or impacts related to this proposal?

This proposal is connected to a 2009 Supplemental Budget Request to reduce the WASL and related appropriations by \$1.903 million.

Impact on Clients and Services

The costs associated with this request provide an improved assessment system:

- new assessments for sight-impaired students;
- new translations to assist students learning English;
- new mathematics and science assessments to reflect new standards; and,
- EOC to better assess high school mathematics subjects.

Impact on Other State Programs

What alternatives were explored by the agency, and why was this alternative chosen?

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There are no alternatives to the request.

What are the consequences of not funding this package?

OSPI would need to substantially reduce the testing scope; the reduction in scope would likely cause the state to be out of compliance with Congressional and U.S. Department of Education testing requirements.

What is the relationship, if any, to the state's capital budget?

None.

What changes would be required to existing statutes, rules, or contracts, in order to implement the change?

None.

Expenditure Calculations and Assumptions:

The expenditures are based on a difference between carry forward budget assumptions and the final contract negotiations, completed in early October 2008.

Object Detail

		FY 2010	FY 2011	Total
A	Salary and Wages	\$	\$0	\$0
B	Employee Benefits	\$0	\$0	\$0
C	Contracts	\$11,224,358	\$12,783,417	\$24,007,775
E	Goods/Services	\$0	\$0	\$0
G	Travel	\$0	\$0	\$0
J	Equipment	\$0	\$0	\$0
N	Grants	\$0	\$0	\$0
	Interagency Reimbursement	\$0	\$0	\$0
	Other	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total Objects		\$11,224,358	\$12,783,417	\$24,007,775

Expenditures & FTEs by Program

Activity Inventory Item	Prog	Staffing			Operating Expenditures		
		FY 2010	FY 2011	Avg	FY 2010	FY 2011	Total
A003 Education Reform	055	0	0	0	\$11,224,358	\$12,783,417	\$24,007,775
Total Activities					\$11,224,358	\$12,783,417	\$24,007,775

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Six-Year Expenditure Estimates

Fund	09-11 Total	11-13 Total	13-15 Total
General Fund-State	\$24,007,775	\$26,216,834	Unknown
Expenditure Total	\$24,007,775	\$26,216,834	Unknown
FTEs	0	0	0

Distinction between one-time and ongoing costs:

All operating costs are on-going.

Budget impacts in future biennia:

The amounts will increase with inflation.