

Eliminate Grad Requirements – N2

Agency: 350 Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction
Budget Period: 2015

Recommendation Summary Text (Short Description):

The Superintendent recommends eliminating the graduation requirements associated with the state assessment program. This will reduce overall testing activities for students and districts. Based on the state's adoption of new learning standards (Common Core State Standards and Next Generation Science Standards), implementation of assessments measuring college and career readiness, the adoption of new credit requirements for exiting high school, and the new Achievement Index used for school and district accountability, the Superintendent believes the increased rigor in Washington high schools makes current assessment graduation requirements unnecessary and that the associated resources should be repurposed to programs that reduce student dropouts.

Fiscal Detail

Operating Expenditures		FY 2016	FY 2017	Total
General Fund	001-01	(\$14,695,347)	(\$14,666,703)	(\$29,362,050)
Total Cost				

Staffing		FY 2016	FY 2017	Annual Avg.
Total FTEs Requested		(5.0)	(5.0)	(5.0)

Package Description (Includes the following sections)

Background

The state has for several years mandated students pass high school assessments in various content areas to be able to graduate. Acknowledging that a single attempt to fulfill these requirements would be unfair for a good portion of students, the high school assessment requirements necessitate the ability for retesting and alternative forms of testing to ensure each student has an appropriate means to demonstrate his or her knowledge and skills.

But in recent years the state has transitioned to a place of raised rigor and expectation of students matriculating through the elementary and secondary education program.

- The State Board of Education recommended and the State adopted increased credit requirements associated with a student's matriculation through high school and graduation.
- WA has adopted new learning standards (Common Core State Standards and Next Generation Science Standards) that will enhance learning toward higher levels of rigor and critical thinking designed to place students in better stead for competing in the 21st century.
- The state is implementing assessments aligned to the new learning standards (English language arts and mathematics), and will soon be implementing (science) standards designed to measure college and career readiness.

Eliminate Grad Requirements – N2

With these three elements of transition, the Superintendent believes that the state system for validating student preparedness for post-secondary education life has progressed to the point to allow for a reduction in assessment requirements.

Current Situation

Students in the Class of 2015 and beyond must pass tests in English Language Arts, Math and Biology to graduate from high school.

State law requires OSPI to offer all students at least two opportunities to pass the test per year.

State law further requires OSPI to offer students alternative ways of passing these tests, they include:

- Collection of Evidence
- College Entrance Scores
- Out-of-State Tests
- Grades Comparison
- Recent Transfer Waiver
- Special Education Alternatives.

Proposed Solution

- The agency proposes that graduation requirements linked to assessments be eliminated.
- The resulting impacts will be direct reduction in the state's assessment expenditures due to elimination of retesting and alternative testing formats and both direct expenditure and indirect costs borne by the districts in supporting the graduation alternatives.
- Use Smarter Balanced assessments to signal if students, teachers and systems are on track for graduating students college and career ready.
- Use the 11th grade tests as a "Green, Yellow, Red" indicator of services/instruction needed in senior year, which will increase the number of students taking math and ELA courses, which the test will show they still need. This is the most meaningful way to prepare students for college and career readiness.

Superintendent Dorn believes the resources saved in implementing this policy should be repurposed to provide a comprehensive Dropout Program, which he has submitted as a separate decision package.

Contact person

- Robin Munson, Asst. Superintendent - Assessment & Student Information
- Michael Middleton, Director – Select Assessments & Business Enterprises

Narrative Justification and Impact Statement (Includes the following section)

What specific performance outcomes does the agency expect?

Eliminate Grad Requirements – N2

District instructional time will increase because there will be fewer testing activities.

The number of students taking additional math and ELA courses in 12th grade will increase because those students who don't pass the 11th grade SBAC test would now be required to take additional course work in areas in which they don't receive a "green" indicator.

The agency expects reductions in overall expenses to support the state testing program and less burden experienced by districts and schools in addressing student needs in fulfilling assessment related graduation requirements.

Performance Measure Detail

Fewer students would take remediation courses in college.

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

This package allows for attention and resources to be placed at the points of intervention in aiding students achieve the goals the system desires for all in the K12 system and not expending time and money on additional testing without assurances that the required learning has been attained. This is consistent with agency aims to raise graduation rates, focus on areas of student need earlier in K12 matriculation (i.e., elementary school) and defining a picture better student preparedness for life after K12.

Reason for change:

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

Yes, with the possibility for re-allocation of resources, the K12 system can focus energies in areas that will support achieving world-class status in areas of online educational interfaces, stronger performance in STEM-related subject matters, and students better prepared for success and competition in the 21st century.

Does this decision package provide essential support to one or more of the Governor's Results Washington priorities? If so, describe.

Yes. Goal 1.2.c – Increase access to effective dropout prevention programs.

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

Various stakeholders will support the designs of this proposal in the fact that direct resource expenditures can be reallocated toward student supports that affect attaining achievement rather than measuring achievement. Additionally, indirect benefits will be recognized from a reallocation of necessary time used in testing/measuring toward instructional opportunities that will further benefit students attaining learning expectations.

Impact on Other State Programs

Eliminate Grad Requirements – N2

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

Other alternatives included still requiring pass the same assessments to graduate, but requiring an additional high school credit in any content area in which there is not a “green” indicator on the SBAC tests and limiting the Collection of Evidence (COE) in Math to eliminate the Geometry COE.

This alternative was chosen because Superintendent Dorn believes the state has transitioned to a place of raised rigor and expectation of students matriculating through the elementary and secondary education program that make current graduation requirements unnecessary.

What are the consequences of adopting or not adopting this package?

Consequences from adopting the package are qualitative adjustments associated with determining a student’s fulfill of graduation.

Consequences from not adopting the package are continued increases in expenditures to support retesting and alternative testing formats, and retention of the existing graduation 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?

Agency will be proposing legislative package to revise existing statutes involving graduation requirements. Substantive changes to RCW 28A.655 would be required, as well as to OSPI WACs.

Expenditure and revenue calculations and assumptions:

Revenue Calculations and Assumptions:

None

Expenditure Calculations and Assumptions:

Eliminate Grad Requirements – N2

Assessment DP - Graduation Requirements Eliminated				
<i>{Eliminates G10 ELA & Math EOC testing (green highlights) and all graduation alternatives (blue highlights)}</i>				
<i>{Assumes adoption of FY15-17 Biennium ML DP}</i>				
	FY16		FY17	
Program Descriptor	ML (projected)	Savings	ML (projected)	Savings
<i>Smarter Balanced Summative Assessment</i>	\$16,395,530	\$0	\$16,511,831	\$0
<i>Smarter Balanced Interim/Formative Assessment</i>	\$1,836,117	\$0	\$1,836,117	\$0
<i>Science (G5, 8 & Biology EOC)</i>	\$4,510,546	\$0	\$5,620,949	\$0
<i>Alternate Assessment (1%)</i>	1,806,829.00	\$0	1,492,729.00	\$0
Accountability Assessments (a)	\$24,549,022	\$0	\$25,461,626	\$0
Technical Correction to Smarter Balance Savings				
<i>Add back administrative costs eliminated in Line 5 (b)</i>	5,797,966.00	\$531,301	5,797,966.00	\$531,301
<i>Smarter Balanced used for G10 ELA</i>	\$1,405,291	\$1,405,291	\$1,419,037	\$1,419,037
<i>Smarter Balanced used for Math EOC</i>	\$3,269,486	\$3,269,486	\$3,299,515	\$3,299,515
End of Course/Grade 10 Requirements (ELA, Math EOC) (c)	\$4,674,777	\$4,674,777	\$4,718,552	\$4,718,552
<i>COE (ELA, Math, Bio)</i>	\$7,511,818	\$7,511,818	\$7,434,000	\$7,434,000
<i>Other Alternatives</i>	\$1,977,451	\$1,977,451	\$1,982,850	\$1,982,850
Graduation Alternatives (d)	\$9,489,269	\$9,489,269	\$9,416,850	\$9,416,850
Cumulative Change	\$44,511,034	\$14,695,347	\$45,394,994	\$14,666,703

Reduction in the state's assessment expenditures due to elimination of retesting and alternative testing formats and both direct expenditure and indirect costs borne by the districts in supporting the graduation alternatives. Reductions include 5.0 full time staff and standard supplies and travel costs.

Object Detail

		FY 2016	FY 2017	Total
A	Salary and Wages	(\$330,252)	(\$330,252)	(\$660,504)
B	Employee Benefits	(\$97,537)	(\$97,537)	(\$195,074)
C	Contracts	(\$10,447,046)	(\$10,418,402)	(\$20,865,448)
E	Goods/Services	(\$103,512)	(\$103,512)	(\$207,024)
G	Travel	\$0	\$0	\$0
J	Equipment	\$0	\$0	\$0
N	Grants	(\$3,717,000)	(\$3,717,000)	(\$7,434,000)
	Interagency Reimbursement	\$0	\$0	\$0
	Other	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total Objects		(\$14,695,347)	(\$14,666,703)	(\$29,362,050)

Expenditures & FTEs by Program

Eliminate Grad Requirements – N2

Activity Inventory Item	Prog	Staffing			Operating Expenditures		
		FY 2016	FY 2017	Avg	FY 2016	FY 2017	Total
A003 Assessment	055	(5.0)	(5.0)	(5.0)	(\$14,695,347)	(\$14,666,703)	(\$29,362,050)
Total Activities		(5.0)	(5.0)	(5.0)	(\$14,695,347)	(\$14,666,703)	(\$29,362,050)

Six-Year Expenditure Estimates

Fund	15-17 Total	17-19 Total	19-21 Total
General Fund 001-1	(\$29,362,050)	(\$29,456,992)	(\$29,564,667)
Expenditure Total	(\$29,362,050)	(\$29,456,992)	(\$29,564,667)
FTEs	(5.0)	(5.0)	(5.0)

Which costs and functions are one-time? Which are ongoing? What are the budget impacts in future biennia?

Cost savings would be on-going, however the cost impact would be neutral if the funding was repurposed to a dropout program.

Assessment DP - Graduation Requirements Eliminated

{Eliminates G10 ELA & Math EOC testing (green highlights) and all graduation alternatives (blue highlights)}

{Assumes adoption of FY15-17 Biennium ML DP}

	FY16		FY17		FY18		FY19		FY20		FY21	
Program Descriptor	ML (projected)	Savings	ML (projected)	Savings	ML (revised)	Savings						
1 Smarter Balanced Summative Assessment	\$16,395,530	\$0	\$16,511,831	\$0	\$15,570,917	\$0	\$15,682,291	\$0	\$15,682,291	\$0	\$15,682,291	\$0
2 Smarter Balanced Interim/Formative Assessment	\$1,836,117	\$0	\$1,836,117	\$0	\$1,836,117	\$0	\$1,836,117	\$0	\$1,836,117	\$0	\$1,836,117	\$0
3 Science (G5, 8 & Biology EOC)	\$4,510,546	\$0	\$5,620,949	\$0	\$2,798,707	\$0	\$2,810,701	\$0	\$2,810,701	\$0	\$2,810,701	\$0
4 Alternate Assessment (1%)	1,806,829.00	\$0	1,492,729.00	\$0	\$1,492,729	\$0	\$1,492,729	\$0	\$1,492,729	\$0	\$1,492,729	\$0
5 Accountability Assessments (a)	\$24,549,022	\$0	\$25,461,626	\$0	\$21,698,471	\$0	\$21,821,838	\$0	\$21,821,838	\$0	\$21,821,838	\$0
6 Technical Correction to Smarter Balance Savings												
7 Add back administrative costs eliminated in Line 5 (b)	5,797,966.00	\$531,301	5,797,966.00	\$531,301	\$5,797,966	\$531,301	\$5,797,966	\$531,301	\$5,797,966	\$531,301	\$5,797,966	\$531,301
8 Smarter Balanced used for G10 ELA	\$1,405,291	\$1,405,291	\$1,419,037	\$1,419,037	\$1,434,174	\$1,419,037	\$1,449,308	\$1,449,308	\$1,449,308	\$1,449,308	\$1,449,308	\$1,449,308
9 Smarter Balanced used for Math EOC	\$3,269,486	\$3,269,486	\$3,299,515	\$3,299,515	\$3,333,786	\$3,299,515	\$3,368,804	\$3,368,804	\$3,368,804	\$3,368,804	\$3,368,804	\$3,368,804
10 End of Course/Grade 10 Requirements (ELA, Math EOC) (c)	\$4,674,777	\$4,674,777	\$4,718,552	\$4,718,552	\$4,767,960	\$4,718,552	\$4,818,112	\$4,818,112	\$4,818,112	\$4,818,112	\$4,818,112	\$4,818,112
11 COE (ELA, Math, Bio)	\$7,511,818	\$7,511,818	\$7,434,000	\$7,434,000	\$7,434,000	\$7,434,000	\$7,434,000	\$7,434,000	\$7,434,000	\$7,434,000	\$7,434,000	\$7,434,000
12 Other Alternatives	\$1,977,451	\$1,977,451	\$1,982,850	\$1,982,850	\$1,990,806	\$1,990,806	\$1,998,920	\$1,998,920	\$1,998,920	\$1,998,920	\$1,998,920	\$1,998,920
13 Graduation Alternatives (d)	\$9,489,269	\$9,489,269	\$9,416,850	\$9,416,850	\$9,424,806	\$9,424,806	\$9,432,920	\$9,432,920	\$9,432,920	\$9,432,920	\$9,432,920	\$9,432,920
14 Cumulative Change	\$44,511,034	\$14,695,347	\$45,394,994	\$14,666,703	\$41,689,203	\$14,674,658	\$41,870,836	\$14,782,334	\$41,870,836	\$14,782,334	\$41,870,836	\$14,782,334

- Notes: (a) All testing under Accountability is retained to meet federal testing requirements.
 (b) Staff reductions associated with administration of graduation assessment alternatives
 (c) All exit exams and EOCs eliminated
 (d) COE and graduation alternatives eliminated; no retesting in high school