

## Elimination of Graduation Testing Requirements AC

**Agency:** 350 Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction  
**Budget Period:** 2015-17

### **Recommendation Summary Text:**

The Superintendent recommends streamlining the graduation requirements associated with the state assessment program. Students who do not earn a Certificate of Academic Achievement (CAA) by passing the state assessments will be able to earn a CAA by completing a locally determined course in the deficit content area. This will reduce overall testing activities for students, schools, districts, and the state by eliminating the need for current CAA alternatives. The Superintendent believes academic rigor is already increasing and further instruction is the best alternative for earning the CAA.

### **Fiscal Detail**

<b>Operating Expenditures</b>		<b>FY 2016</b>	<b>FY 2017</b>	<b>Total</b>
General Fund	001-1	See Note	(\$14,667,000)	(\$14,667,000)
<b>Total Cost</b>				

<b>Staffing</b>	<b>FY 2016</b>	<b>FY 2017</b>	<b>Annual Avg.</b>
<b>Total FTEs Requested</b>	See Note	(5.0)	(5.0)

NOTE: Due to expected timing of legislative action in the 2016 session, assumption of the decision package is that no reduction will be recognized for FY16.

### **Package Description**

#### **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 21<sup>st</sup> century.

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- 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.

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 alternatives.

### **Current Situation**

Students in the Class of 2017 and beyond must pass tests in English Language Arts (ELA), Math and Biology to graduate from high school. (Class of 2016 students are required to pass only ELA and Math).

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 / AP or IB
- Out-of-State Tests
- Grades Comparison
- Recent Transfer Waiver
- Special Education Alternatives.

### **Proposed Solution**

- The agency proposes that state assessments continue to be used to earn a Certificate of Academic Achievement but that a new alternative, passing a rigorous course in the deficit content area, replace the current CAA alternatives.
- Use Smarter Balanced assessments (and new science assessment when it is developed) to signal if students, teachers and systems are on track for graduating students college and career ready.
- Use the 11<sup>th</sup> grade tests as a “Green, Yellow, Red” indicator of services/instruction needed in senior year, which will increase the number of students taking rigorous courses in their senior year. This is the most meaningful way to prepare students for college and career readiness.

The resulting impacts will be a 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.

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**

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

### **Narrative Justification and Impact Statement**

#### **What specific performance outcomes does the agency expect?**

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

The number of students taking additional math and ELA courses in 12<sup>th</sup> grade will increase because those students who don't pass the 11<sup>th</sup> grade tests 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 fewer burdens 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 21<sup>st</sup> 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

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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**

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

Other alternatives included eliminating assessment graduation requirements altogether.

This alternative was chosen because Superintendent Dorn believes it preserves high standards for graduation while streamlining the alternatives to assist students in reaching those standards.

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

Consequences from not adopting the package are continued increases in expenditures to support retesting and alternative testing formats.

#### **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

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### Expenditure Calculations and Assumptions:

#### Assessment DP - Eliminate HS Graduation Assessments

Eliminates G10 ELA & Math EOC testing (green) & all graduation alternatives (blue)

Program Descriptor	FY16 (see note)	FY17 Savings
<i>COE content development, COE implementation, CAA/CIA Options Coordinator - 5.0 FTEs</i>	-	-
<b>Staffing impacts</b>	-	<b>(531,598)</b>
<i>Smarter Balanced used for G10 ELA</i>	-	(1,419,037)
<i>Smarter Balanced used for Math EOC</i>	-	(3,299,515)
<b>End of Course/Grade 10 Requirements (ELA, Math EOC)</b>	-	<b>(4,718,552)</b>
<i>COE (ELA, Math, Bio)</i>	-	(7,434,000)
<i>Other Alternatives</i>	-	(1,982,850)
<b>Graduation Alternatives</b>	-	<b>(9,416,850)</b>
<b>Total Savings each fiscal year (rounded)</b>	-	<b>(14,667,000)</b>

NOTE: Due to expected timing of legislative action, DP assumption is no reductions available for FY16

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)
B	Employee Benefits	-	(\$97,537)	(\$97,537)
C	Contracts	-	(\$10,418,402)	(\$10,418,402)
E	Goods/Services	-	(\$103,809)	(\$103,809)
G	Travel	-	\$0	\$0
J	Equipment	-	\$0	\$0
N	Grants	-	(\$3,717,000)	(\$3,717,000)
	Interagency Reimbursement	-	\$0	\$0
	Other	-	\$0	\$0
<b>Total Objects</b>		<b>See Note</b>	<b>(14,667,000)</b>	<b>(14,667,000)</b>

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**Expenditures & FTEs by Program**

Activity Inventory Item	Prog	Staffing			Operating Expenditures		
		FY 2016	FY 2017	Avg	FY 2016	FY 2017	Total
A003 Assessment	055	-	(5.0)	(5.0)	-	(\$14,667,000)	(\$14,667,000)
<b>Total Activities</b>		<b>See Note</b>	<b>(5.0)</b>	<b>(5.0)</b>	<b>See Note</b>	<b>(\$14,667,000)</b>	<b>(\$14,667,000)</b>

NOTE: Due to expected timing of legislative action in the 2016 session, assumption of the decision package is that no reduction will be recognized for FY16.

**Six-Year Expenditure Estimates**

Fund	15-17 Total	17-19 Total	19-21 Total
General Fund 001-1	(\$14,667,000)	(\$29,449,036)	(\$29,564,665)
<b>Expenditure Total</b>	<b>(\$14,667,000)</b>	<b>(\$29,449,036)</b>	<b>(\$29,564,665)</b>
<b>FTEs</b>	<b>(5.0)</b>	<b>(5.0)</b>	<b>(5.0)</b>

**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.