



REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE

Washington Comprehensive Assessment Program

December 2016

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Executive Summary

The Washington Comprehensive Assessment Program (WCAP) consists of all state tests given to public school students:

- Smarter Balanced Assessments (SBA) in English Language Arts (ELA) and math for students in grades 3-8 and high school.
- Measurements of Student Progress (MSP) in science for grades 5 and 8.
- End-of-Course exams in math and biology.
- Specialized testing for English proficiency, alternative achievement standards, and graduation alternatives.

SBA and Alternate Assessments

The SBA was first given to Washington state students in spring 2015. In spring 2016, a total of 574,800 students took the ELA tests and 551,000 students took the math tests.

Students with significant cognitive challenges can take the Washington Access to Instruction and Measurement (WA-AIM). In spring 2016, about 5,000 students took the WA-AIM.

English Language Learners

Washington is part of a consortium that developed a new test for English language learners. The new test is the English Language Proficiency Assessment for the 21st Century (ELPA21). Students took it for the first time during the 2015–16 school year. The ELPA21 aligns with a common set of English Language Proficiency (ELP) standards. Washington adopted the ELP standards in December 2013.

New Science Assessments

Washington adopted the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) in October 2013. The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) is working with other states to build tests aligned to new standards. The new tests will begin in spring 2018.

Washington Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills (WaKIDS)

All state-funded, full-day kindergarten classrooms must give WaKIDS. About 4,000 teachers from 292 districts completed the fall 2016 assessment for 78,000 kindergartners.

Cost Summary

Costs for 2015–16 were lower than projected at about \$22 million. Costs for 2016–17 may increase due to multiple factors.

2015–16 Smarter Balanced Assessments in English Language Arts and Math

The 2015 Washington Comprehensive Assessment Program (WCAP) legislative report described new assessments that were implemented in 2014–15 due to a change in state standards for English language arts and mathematics. Download the report at: <http://www.k12.wa.us/LegisGov/2015documents/2015-12-WACompAssessmentProgram.pdf>. The 2015–16 school year was the second year for those assessments.

Smarter Balanced Assessments

The 2015–16 school year represented the second implementation year of Washington’s new assessment system developed by the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium. The Common Core State Standards, released in June 2010, are designed to ensure students exiting high school are ready for college or career. The consortium developed assessment instruments that support student learning with summative and interim measures, and formative practices and instructional resources. The Smarter Balanced Assessment system is comprised of the Digital Library, which is a repository of resources to help teachers improve classroom-based assessment practices; interim assessments that provide classroom teachers the opportunity to periodically assess students’ knowledge and skills that are being taught as part of the state’s new learning standards and that will be measured on the final component of Smarter Balanced; and the summative tests that measure college and career readiness at the 11th grade and, in other grades, whether students are on track to be college and career ready.

Washington continues as a “member state” of the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium, with access to all three components of the Smarter Balanced assessment system.

Digital Library

The Digital Library, now available to all educators in the K–12 system, is an online collection of resources aligned to the Common Core that supports K–12 teachers’ use of the formative assessment process. The Digital Library has assessment literacy modules, exemplar instructional modules, and education resources submitted and vetted by teachers. Teachers can rate materials and share their expertise with educators across the country. OSPI collaborates with the Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC) to also grant Digital Library access to Higher Education faculty in teacher preparation programs.

Interim Assessments

Smarter Balanced interim assessments are also available to all school districts in Washington for optional administration in grades 3–8 and high school. The interim assessments are designed to allow schools to check in on student progress and provide

information to inform instruction. There are two types of interim assessments allowing flexible administration options: Interim Comprehensive Assessments (ICAs) and Interim Assessment Blocks (IABs). Interim Comprehensive Assessments use the same design as the summative assessments, assess the same range of standards, and provide scores on the same scale. At the high school level, the ICAs are consistent with the high school summative design and may be administered in grades 9, 10, 11, and/or 12. Interim Assessment Blocks focus on smaller sets of related standards and provide more detailed information for instructional purposes. Smarter Balanced has released Digital Library Connections documents, which were created by educators in collaboration with Smarter Balanced. The purpose of these documents is to link student performance on Smarter Balanced Interim Assessment Blocks (IABs) to specific resources in the Digital Library as instructional supports aligned to students' needs.

Summative Assessments

Summative assessments in ELA and math are administered in grades 3–8 and 11 toward the end of the school year. Students complete a computer adaptive test and performance task in each subject area. Students receive composite scores for each subject area and the following claim-level scores: in ELA—reading, writing, listening, and research; in Math—concepts and procedures, problem solving and modeling/data analysis, and communicating reasoning.

Operational Update

Smarter Balanced tests are designed to be administered online; a key feature of the assessment is that they are computer adaptive, meaning they adjust the difficulty of the items presented to the student's demonstrated knowledge and skill. Paper/pencil testing was available for districts that chose to not administer the online tests, but districts had to pay \$6 per test for each student tested on paper for grades 3–8 and 11.

Table 1: Online Testing Participation

Grade levels	Grade 3	Grades 4–5	Grades 6–8	Grade 11
2009–10	Paper/Pencil	Paper/Pencil	~25%	Paper/Pencil
2010–11	Paper/Pencil	~20%	~40%	Paper/Pencil
2011–12	~15%	~30%	~50%	Paper/Pencil
2012–13	~24%	~42%	~55%	Paper/Pencil
2013–14	~59%	~62%	~67%	Paper/Pencil
2014–15	~97%	~97%	~98%	~97%
2015–16	99.7%	99.6%	99.9%	99.8%

Feedback on Smarter Balanced Tests

OSPI conducted customer satisfaction surveys for teachers, administrators, and students after the Smarter Balanced test administration. Over 400 responses were received for the Educator Survey. Feedback included positive opinions about technology, score reporting and student preparation. Technology worked very well and received the highest rating

from educators. Teachers and administrators were pleased about students’ scores being available in the online reporting system instead of having to wait for hard copy reports which were delivered to districts at the end of the summer. Online reports were available between one and three weeks from the time the students completed their tests. Student preparation was seen to be very strong for the administration.

The length of the tests was a concern for the second year in a row. Writing, which is now assessed at each grade, contributed to this concern. In addition, lack of availability of computers ranked a distant second for the concern of educators.

There were over 200 responses to the survey from students in grades 3–5.

- Over 50 percent of students said the test matched what they learned in class
- Students reported liking having to keyboard/type their answers and using the online tools
- More than 50 percent of students reported taking the practice test more than once
- Feedback was primarily positive

There were over 400 responses from students in grades 6–high school.

- Almost 54 percent of students said the test matched what they learned in class.
- In general, keyboarding answers and use of online tools were the most favorite aspects of online testing.

Testing Times

The feedback described above reflects concerns about the amount of instructional time that is lost because of required testing. In a separate report, OSPI will summarize data submitted by school districts in response to the 2016 Legislature’s budget proviso request for an inventory of state and district mandated tests and the respective amount of time students spend testing.

Status on Legislative Recommendations

[RCW 28A.300.041](#) required a redesign of the state’s assessment system. The table below summarizes the state’s status with respect to each feature requested.

Table 2: Status on Redesign to State Testing

Feature	Status
(1) 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. The Legislature intends to redesign the current statewide system, in accordance with the recommendations of the Washington assessment of student learning	How the Washington Comprehensive Assessment Program (WCAP) addresses each feature:

legislative work group, to:

<p>(a) Include multiple assessment formats, including both formative and summative, as necessary to provide information to help improve instruction and inform accountability;</p>	<p>Smarter Balanced is comprised of a balanced system of formative, interim and summative assessments.</p>
<p>(b) Enable collection of data that allows both statewide and nationwide comparisons of student learning and achievement; and</p>	<p>Washington is one of 15 states, plus one territory and the Bureau of Indian Affairs that administered Smarter Balanced assessments, allowing direct comparisons within our state and across other Smarter Balanced states.</p>
<p>(c) Be balanced so that the information used to make significant decisions that affect school accountability or student educational progress includes many data points and does not rely on solely the results of a single assessment.</p>	<p>Washington's federal and state accountability system incorporates proficiency on state tests, student growth percentiles, attendance (Grades 3–8) and graduation rates (high school), and dual credit course participation.</p>
<p>(2) The Legislature further finds that one component of the assessment system should be instructionally supportive formative assessments. The key design elements or characteristics of an instructionally supportive assessment must:</p>	<p>Smarter Balanced offers educators full access to the Digital Library, a collection resources focused on formative assessment processes, as well as optional interim assessments.</p>
<p>(a) Be aligned to state standards in areas that are being assessed;</p>	<p>The interim assessments and formative assessment processes are fully aligned to current state standards.</p>
<p>(b) Measure student growth and competency at multiple points throughout the year in a manner that allows instructors to monitor student progress and have the necessary trend data with which to improve instruction;</p>	<p>The optional interim assessments may be administered as often as teachers choose but are fixed forms so repeated administrations will not necessarily demonstrate true growth. The formative assessment processes emphasized throughout the Digital Library will fulfill this criteria.</p>
<p>(c) Provide rapid feedback;</p>	<p>Formative assessment practices, by definition, provide immediate feedback to teachers and students. Interim assessment results are available immediately after the teacher hand scores a small number of items. For summative assessments in 2016, 99.5% of results were returned within three weeks, and 58% within 10 days.</p>
<p>(d) Link student growth with instructional elements in order to gauge the effectiveness of educators and curricula;</p>	<p>The Smarter Balanced consortium has released the first two documents identifying the direct connections between particular</p>

	performance patterns on interim assessment blocks and resources in the Digital Library.
(e) Provide tests that are appropriate to the skill level of the student;	Smarter Balanced tests are computer adaptive, meaning they adjust the difficulty of the item the student sees based on the student's performance on previous items.
(f) Support instruction for students of all abilities, including highly capable students and students with learning disabilities;	Smarter Balanced tests are computer adaptive, meaning they adjust the difficulty of the item the student sees based on the student's performance on previous items. Furthermore, teachers may administer interim assessments from higher or lower grades to support instruction of students performing outside their grade level.
(g) Be culturally, linguistically, and cognitively relevant, appropriate, and understandable to each student taking the assessment;	Smarter Balanced item development includes a bias and sensitivity review by members of a wide variety of groups.
(h) Inform parents and draw parents into greater participation of the student's study plan;	Smarter Balanced score reports are designed to inform parents about their child's progress toward college and career readiness. Parents have offered positive feedback about the new reports.
(i) Provide a way to analyze the assessment results relative to characteristics of the student such as, but not limited to, English language learners, gender, ethnicity, poverty, age, and disabilities;	All assessment results are disaggregated by racial groups, gender, and program participation including Free/Reduced Meals, ELL, Special Education, and Foster Care.
(j) Strive to be computer-based and adaptive; and	Smarter Balanced tests are computer adaptive, meaning they adjust the difficulty of the item the student sees based on the student's performance on previous items.
(k) Engage students in their learning.	A key part of Digital Library's focus is on formative assessment processes in the engagement of students in their learning and in providing feedback to teachers about student learning.
(3) The Legislature further finds that a second component of the assessment system should be a state-administered summative achievement assessment that can be used as a check on the educational system in order to guide state expectations for the instruction of children and satisfy legislative demands for	Smarter Balanced summative assessments, administered in grades 3–8 and 11 in ELA and math, fulfill these purposes.

accountability. The key design elements or characteristics of the state administered achievement assessment must:

(a) Be aligned to state standards in areas that are being assessed;	Smarter Balanced summative assessments are fully aligned to the state learning standards in ELA and math.
(b) Maintain and increase academic rigor;	The state learning standards assessed by Smarter Balanced assessments are more rigorous than previous state learning standards.
(c) Measure student learning growth over years; and	OSPI calculates student growth percentiles for grades 4–8 in ELA and Math.
(d) Strengthen curriculum.	Smarter Balanced score reports provide both a comprehensive score for the content area and “claim” sub-scores to help inform curricular decisions.
(4) The Legislature further finds that a third component of the assessment system should include classroom-based assessments, which may be formative, summative, or both. Depending on their use, classroom-based assessments should have the same design elements and characteristics described in this section for formative and summative assessments.	Smarter Balanced offers optional interim assessments for both ELA and Math. The Interim Comprehensive Assessments (ICA) mirror the summative assessments in depth and breadth, covering all learning standards at the particular grade level. Shorter Interim Assessment Blocks (IAB) target fewer learning standards and therefore require less time.
(5) The Legislature further finds that to sustain a strong and viable assessment system, pre-service and ongoing training should be provided for teachers and administrators on the effective use of different types of assessments.	OSPI partnered with the Association of Educational Service Districts to develop assessment literacy training that can be used to boost teachers’ knowledge of good assessment practices in general and best practices around the utilization of a comprehensive assessment system. Those training modules are being implemented throughout the state.
(6) The Legislature further finds that as the statewide data system is developed, data should be collected for all state-required statewide assessments to be used for accountability and to monitor overall student achievement.	OSPI is able to use Comprehensive Education Data and Research System (CEDARS) data collection to administer the testing program and report state assessment results.
(7) The superintendent of public instruction, in consultation with the state board of education, shall begin design and development of an	The Washington Comprehensive Assessment System is described in this report.

overall assessment system that meets the principles and characteristics described in this section. In designing formative and summative assessments, the superintendent shall solicit bids for the use of computerized adaptive testing methodologies.

(8) Beginning December 1, 2009, and annually thereafter, the superintendent and state board shall jointly report to the Legislature regarding the assessment system, including a cost analysis of any changes and costs to expand availability and use of instructionally supportive formative assessments. This report fulfills this requirement.

2015–16 Continuation of Science Assessments in Grades 5, 8, and High School

Science testing remained constant in 2015–16 while assessments aligned with the new Next Generation Science Standards are being developed. The Measurements of Student Progress was again administered in grades 5 and 8, and the Biology End-of-Course Exam was given in high school, per state and federal requirements. The results of each are presented in the next section.

Overview of 2016 Assessment Results

The following table presents the percent of students meeting standard on each of the tests for all grades used in federal accountability.

Table 3: Achievement Results for 2016 ELA, Math, and Science

ELA – Smarter Balanced								
Grade	No Score	Level 1	Level 2	% Not Meeting Standard	Basic (met standard)	Level 3	Level 4	% Meeting Standard
3	1.9%	21.5%	22.1%	45.6%	0.3%	23.0%	30.9%	54.3%
4	1.7%	23.1%	18.0%	42.9%	0.4%	24.5%	32.0%	57.0%
5	1.8%	20.5%	17.4%	39.8%	0.5%	32.1%	27.4%	60.1%
6	1.8%	18.3%	23.2%	43.4%	0.5%	34.2%	21.8%	56.5%
7	2.4%	18.3%	20.5%	41.4%	0.6%	36.7%	21.2%	58.5%
8	2.8%	15.9%	21.3%	40.2%	0.7%	38.6%	20.4%	59.7%
11	38.8%	19.0%	21.6%	79.5%	0.8%	15.7%	3.8%	20.4%
Math – Smarter Balanced								
Grade	No	Level	Level	% Not	Basic (met	Level	Level	% Meeting

	Score	1	2	Meeting Standard	standard)	3	4	Standard
3	1.9%	18.2%	20.8%	41.0%	0.2%	31.0%	27.5%	58.9%
4	1.8%	15.7%	26.9%	44.5%	0.4%	28.3%	26.6%	55.4%
5	1.9%	23.3%	25.5%	50.7%	0.3%	20.2%	28.5%	49.2%
6	1.9%	23.5%	26.3%	51.9%	0.2%	21.5%	26.2%	48.0%
7	2.5%	21.9%	25.6%	50.1%	0.3%	23.9%	25.4%	49.8%
8	3.2%	25.9%	23.0%	52.1%	0.2%	20.0%	27.4%	47.8%
11	38.8%	23.2%	16.6%	78.7%	0.0%	13.2%	8.0%	21.2%

Science – MSP

Grade	No Score	Level 1	Level 2	% Not Meeting Standard	Basic (met standard)	Level 3	Level 4	% Meeting Standard
5	2.0%	15.4%	17.1%	34.6%	0.4%	31.8%	32.9%	65.3%
8	3.2%	9.3%	19.9%	32.4%	0.8%	43.9%	22.6%	67.5%

Science – Biology EOC

Grade	No Score	Level 1	Level 2	% Not Meeting Standard		Level 3	Level 4	% Meeting Standard
10	12.8%	5.8%	18.7%	37.4%	1.5%	34.3%	26.5%	62.5%

2015–16 Implementation of Exit Exams

2015–16 marked continuation of the exit exams that were administered for the first time in 2014–15, per RCW 28A.655.070.

Math

Two math exit exams were administered: Algebra 1/Integrated Math 1 and Geometry/Integrated Math 2. Both exams were developed to assess skills covered in the state’s new math learning standards in each of the designated courses. Students in the class of 2018 and earlier may use a math exit exam to meet their mathematics assessment graduation requirement. Statewide results for each math End-of-Course (EOC) are presented below in Table 5.

Table 4: Achievement Results for 2016 EOC Year 1 Math, Year 2 Math

Mathematics EOC: Algebra or Integrated 1 Exit Exam							
Grade	Level 1	Level 2	% Not Meeting Standard	Basic (met standard)	Level 3	Level 4	% Meeting Standard
10	46.3%	21.8%	68.1%	1.7%	20.4%	9.8%	31.9%
11	48.2%	22.5%	70.7%	1.2%	19.3%	8.7%	29.3%
12	46.0%	26.0%	72.0%	.1%	20.6%	7.2%	28.0%
All Grades	46.8%	22.4%	69.3%	1.4%	20.1%	9.2%	30.7%
Mathematics EOC: Geometry or Integrated 2 Exit Exam							
Grade	Level 1	Level 2	% Not Meeting Standard	Basic (met standard)	Level 3	Level 4	% Meeting Standard
10	21.4%	20.8%	42.2%	.9%	26.3%	30.6%	57.8%
11	29.8%	26.6%	56.5%	1.0%	24.4%	18.2%	43.5%
12	32.9%	31.7%	64.6%	.4%	24.0%	11.0%	35.4%
All Grades	24.4%	23.1%	47.4%	.9%	25.6%	26.0%	52.6%

English Language Arts (ELA)

The high school Smarter Balanced ELA assessment, which is required of all 11th graders for accountability, was also administered to all 10th graders, per state legislative requirement, as the exit exam to fulfill the ELA assessment graduation requirement. Ninety percent of 10th graders took this assessment and of those, 71.4 percent demonstrated college and career readiness (CCR) by earning a score of Level 3 or Level 4. These students who have already demonstrated college and career readiness will not need to retake the ELA test in 11th grade. Instead, for purposes of school and district accountability, their “previously passed” score will be rolled forward so they will count as a participant and as proficient.

For graduation purposes the State Board of Education established a lower cut score to ease the impact of the more rigorous learning standards on the first few cohorts of students who

must meet standard to graduate (see State Board’s section later in this report). Table 6, below shows the results of 10th graders on the Smarter Balanced high school ELA test.

Table 5: Achievement Results for 2016 ELA Smarter Balanced Exit Exam, Grade 10

Grade	No Score	Did Not Meet Exit Exam Standard	Met Special Ed Exit Exam Standard	Met Exit Exam but not CCR Standard	Met CCR Standard
10	1.8%	17.4%	0.9%	8.5%	71.4%

2015–16 Implementation of Exit Exam Alternatives

Most of the state’s exit exam alternatives in 2015–16 were similar to 2014–15. Graduation options available to students continue to include:

- **Collection of Evidence:** a new ELA COE was implemented, replacing the reading and writing COEs; mathematics COEs started in 2013 and biology in 2014
- **College entrance exams:** SAT, ACT, AP, IB
- **Grade Comparison:** evaluating a student against cohort of similar course-taking students who met standard on the assessment

In addition, students can be given a “waiver” if they have already met standard on a comparable test in another state, or under particular circumstances for students in special education (locally determined assessment or awareness waiver).

Finally, there is a review panel to decide if a student’s special circumstance appeal should be granted, allowing the student to graduate without having met standard on a particular test.

Table 7 shows the counts of students who accessed Certificate of Academic Achievement options in the 2015–16 school year.

Table 6: Graduation Alternatives Accessed in 2015–16

Graduation Alternative Type	Number of Students Using Graduation Alternative	EOC							
		ELA	Reading	Writing	Math	Math Year2	Math Year1	EOC Biology	Science
COE	4,572	365	968	702	501	96	2,661	227	0
College Entrance Test	2,127	109	1,024	519	1,118	0	0	0	553
GPA	61	4	4	8	30	0	0	0	26

Out of State (Waiver)	1,591	742	412	307	1,247	0	0	0	717
LDA	1,611	5	648	713	1,150	0	0	0	12
Awareness Waiver	56	55	1	1	55	0	0	0	50
Special Circumstances (Waiver)	28	4	6	14	19	0	0	0	5

Table 8 shows how many 12th graders used each option for meeting their assessment graduation requirements. The number of students who accessed the options exceeds the number of students who ultimately needed the option for graduation in cases where the student tested on the general assessment as well as used an option. If standard was met on the general assessment, the student is represented in that row rather than in the row for the particular option.

Table 7: How Students in the Class of 2016 Fulfilled Assessment Graduation Requirements

Assessment or CAA/CIA Option	ELA		Mathematics	
	#	%	#	%
Total Met Graduation Requirement	74,636	91.4%	74,523	91.3%
HSPE/EOC	24,573	30.1%	13,532	16.6%
Smarter Balanced	43,653	53.5%	52,093	63.8%
Subtotal: High School General Assessment	68,226	83.6%	65,625	80.4%
HSPE/EOC-Basic	1,406	1.7%	1,619	2.0%
WAAS Developmentally Appropriate Proficiency Exam	1,454	1.8%	2,120	2.6%
WAAS Portfolio	772	0.9%	768	0.9%
Locally Determined Assessments	478	0.6%	912	1.1%
Smarter Balanced-Basic	223	0.3%	19	0.0%
Subtotal: Washington Alternative Assessments (Special Education)	4,333	5.3%	5,438	6.7%
Collection of Evidence	816	1.0%	1,886	2.3%
PSAT/SAT/ACT/AP	546	0.7%	752	0.9%
Grades Comparison	5	0.0%	15	0.0%
Subtotal: Certificate of Academic Achievement Options	1,367	1.7%	2653	3.2%
Out-of-State Waivers	693	0.8%	784	1.0%
Awareness Level Waivers (Special Education)	15	0.0%	16	0.0%
Special Circumstance Appeals	2	0.0%	7	0.0%
Subtotal: Special Waiver	710	0.9%	807	1.0%
Tested: Not Met	3,926	4.8%	4,393	5.4%

No Score	3,095	3.8%	2,741	3.4%
Total Not Yet Met Graduation Requirement	7,021	8.6%	7,134	8.7%
Total Students	81,657	100.0%	81,657	100.0%

2015–16 Implementation of WA-AIM Alternate Assessment

Washington administered its alternate assessment, Washington Access to Instruction and Measurement (WA-AIM) for the second year in 2015–16. The WA-AIM is the state’s alternate assessment using alternate achievement standards (AA-AAS), designed specifically for administration to students with significant cognitive challenges. WA-AIM came about in association with the states transition to college and career ready learning standards, and the need to develop an assessment with alignment and correspondence to the state’s general learning standards.

The WA-AIM addresses a greater breadth of content standards than the former WAAS-Portfolio. WA-AIM, which is a performance task-based assessment, focuses teachers on instructing and measuring student performance on skills aligned to the “essential elements” developed as part of the Dynamic Learning Maps project, thus linking our current methods for documenting achievement toward college and career ready standards by students who are significantly cognitively challenged.

For the 2015–16 school year, WA-AIM was administered to students in grades 3–8 and 11 for English language arts (ELA) and math, and grades 5, 8 and 11 in science. Achievement levels (cut-scores) were established during summer 2015 for ELA, math, and for science in grades 5 and 8; high school science achievement levels were established in May 2016 to align with reporting of results for the other content areas.

Table 8: Achievement Results for 2016 WA-AIM

ELA – WA-AIM								
Grade	No Score	Level 1	Level 2	% Not Meeting Standard	Basic (met standard)	Level 3	Level 4	% Meeting Standard
3	0.2%	12.6%	25.0%	37.9%	NA	27.7%	34.3%	62.0%
4	0.1%	11.2%	28.8%	40.2%	NA	36.9%	22.7%	59.7%
5	1.6%	9.0%	27.3%	38.1%	NA	45.2%	16.6%	61.8%
6	0.6%	18.6%	28.5%	47.8%	NA	32.5%	19.6%	52.1%
7	0.7%	14.4%	34.7%	50.0%	NA	35.4%	14.5%	50.0%
8	1.6%	16.2%	29.0%	46.9%	NA	31.5%	21.5%	53.0%
11	1.3%	17.1%	35.7%	54.2%	NA	39.0%	6.6%	45.7%

Math – WA-AIM								
Grade	No Score	Level 1	Level 2	% Not Meeting Standard	Basic (met standard)	Level 3	Level 4	% Meeting Standard

3	0.8%	10.5%	26.6%	38.0%	NA	29.3%	32.5%	61.9%
4	0.9%	9.4%	30.9%	41.2%	NA	32.7%	25.9%	58.7%
5	2.3%	8.4%	21.9%	32.8%	NA	37.2%	29.8%	67.1%
6	2.4%	12.8%	30.9%	46.2%	NA	24.5%	29.1%	53.7%
7	1.8%	15.1%	28.0%	45.0%	NA	35.9%	19.0%	54.9%
8	2.0%	18.1%	33.7%	53.9%	NA	28.3%	17.7%	46.0%
11	3.6%	12.1%	27.1%	42.9%	NA	33.5%	23.5%	57.0%

English Language Proficiency Assessment for the 21st Century (ELPA21)

2015–2016 marked the first administration of ELPA21 in Washington schools. ELPA21 is a nine-state consortium that, using an U.S. Department of Education (ED) grant, developed a new English language proficiency assessment (ELPA) aligned to state English language proficiency standards adopted in December 2013.

Expectations of the ED grant charged the multi-state consortium to develop a new English language proficiency assessments aligned to a common set of English language proficiency (ELP) standards which hold correspondences to the Common Core State Standards.

September 2016 marks the conclusion of the grant project, and the ELPA21 consortium will transfer its activities to the newly identified host, the National Center for Research, Evaluation, Standards, and Student Testing (CRESST) at UCLA. Washington’s membership in the consortium includes a role in the governance board that guides ELPA21’s future development and administration activities.

Other Assessment Program Initiatives

Other efforts within the assessment program include:

- Assessment development for the Next Generation Science Standards
- Washington Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills (WaKIDS)

Development of new science assessments:

Washington’s new learning standards in science, Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), require new assessments. Committees of grade-level educators met in 2015–16 to develop and review items for the new assessments. A small number of items were piloted in grades 5 and 8 in the spring of 2016. Information from the pilot was used to inform the development of additional items, which will be field tested in the spring of 2017. A field test ensures that the questions are fair and accurate for all students. The field test items will appear within the current online science test for grades 5 and 8, the Measurements of Student Progress. Districts and schools will be invited to participate in the online high school field test. The new NGSS-aligned science assessments will replace the current science tests in the spring of 2018.

Washington Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills (WaKIDS)

OSPI has continued implementation of the Washington Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills (WaKIDS), a kindergarten transition process that includes measurement of the skills, knowledge, and characteristics of incoming kindergartners.

WaKIDS is a kindergarten transition process intended to:

- Welcome families into the Washington K–12 system as partners in their child’s education
- Give kindergarten teachers information about the development of children in their classroom to help them teach every child. The assessment provides information about each child’s social/emotional, cognitive, language/literacy, mathematical, and physical development
- Align practices of early learning professionals and kindergarten teachers to support smooth transitions for children
- Offer a statewide snapshot of where children in Washington are in their development at the start of kindergarten, to help inform state-level decisions about policy and investments

Second Substitute Senate Bill 5427, passed during the 2011 legislative session, initiated the move toward statewide WaKIDS implementation. The Legislature mandated that WaKIDS be implemented in state-funded, full-day kindergarten beginning in 2012–13. Prior to 2012–13, participation was voluntary (RCW 28A.655.080). Table 10 shows the evolution of WaKIDS implementation.

Table 9: WaKIDS Participation

	2011–12	2012–13	2013–14	2014–15	2015–16	2016–17
Full-Day K funding	21%	22%	44%	44%	72%	100%
WaKIDS Districts	65	105	187	193	257	266*
WaKIDS Schools	156	309	506	623	887	1,119*
WaKIDS Teachers	452	1,150	1,800	2,110	2,974	4,000*
WaKIDS Kindergartners	6,661	21,812	38,443	43,298	58,656	77,975*
Total Kindergartners in State	78,096	80,679	81,530	80,714	79,401	82,207*
% of all Kindergartners in WaKIDS	8.5%	27%	47%	52%*	74%*	95%*

*Data collection for 2015–16 was recently completed but, until the data are verified, the numbers are approximations only

State, federal, and private funding sources supported WaKIDS in 2015–16. While the state is the primary source of support, carryover funds from the Department of Early Learning’s

Race to the Top grant, private funding secured by Thrive Washington, and carryover funding from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation helped support advanced WaKIDS training, early learning collaboration activities, and research on promising practice.

Table 11 shows that overall percentages of students demonstrating characteristics of entering kindergartners varied by area assessed in 2015–16.

Table 10: 2015–16 WaKIDS Results (From highest to lowest)

Area of Development and Learning	Percent Demonstrating Characteristics of Entering Kindergartners
Literacy	80.9%
Language Development	78.9%
Physical Development	77.4%
Cognitive Development	74.6%
Social-Emotional Development	73.2%
Math	60.8%

Math (counting, quantifying, and understanding shapes) continues to be the least strong area for entering kindergartners. Additional results for WaKIDS are available on the [OSPI Report Card](#).

The fall 2016 WaKIDS data will be available on the state report card in January 2017.

Cost Analysis

For 2015–16 Washington’s assessment costs were effectively stable as service providers settled into the contracted arrangements and program fulfillment. The only change in service costs was with the state’s English language proficiency assessment as the first administration of the English Language Proficiency Assessment for the 21st Century (ELPA21) occurred this past spring.

Over the course of the 2015–16 administration year, other than the transition of services supporting ELPA21 (an acknowledged increase), the actual costs for assessments declined. These reductions came about mostly from fewer students accessing more expensive graduation alternatives (specifically COE and retesting for science). Costs for the alternatives cost a little in excess of \$7 million in FY16. That was \$3.8 million less than estimated, primarily because the science graduation requirement had been temporarily waived. OSPI projects graduation alternative assessment costs to continue at \$11 million annually, as science graduation requirement is reinstated and other alternatives will continue around current levels. Annual costs for accountability testing (general and alternate assessment) held at about \$22 million.

Other assessment costs include the kindergarten assessment, projected to approach \$800 thousand for FY17 as full-day kindergarten continues to expand in the state, and the

English language proficiency assessment, which is expected to rise to \$3.6 million for FY17, with the completion of the transition to the ELPA21 instrument and termination of the federal grant supporting the development of ELPA21.

Table 12 shows the assessment contract costs for 2015–16 (estimated and actuals) and projections for 2016–17. Contract budgets are not necessarily built test-by-test, so current year entries are estimates based on contract budgets attributable to each known assessment activity. For 2016–17, projections, though showing an overall increase, remain consistent with earlier estimations of contracted expenditures for the program (accounting for caseload increases and program needs). As the table identifies, the fiscal obligation for the English language proficiency assessment will need adjustment to support the transition to a new testing instrument.

Table 11: 2015–16 and 2016–17 Assessment Contract Costs

	2015–16 (estimated)	2015–16 (actual)	2016–2017 (projected)	Notes
Accountability Assessments (General)				
ELA and Math Smarter Balanced Grades 3–8 and 11	\$16,643,806	\$16,815,834	\$19,751,106	Includes 10th grade participation
Science MSP (G5 & 8); Biology EOC	\$2,743,669	\$2,236,669	\$2,312,241	
Next Generation Science Standards Test Development	\$945,700	\$1,085,750	\$2,796,931	Continued development & start of pilot testing 2016–17
Accountability Assessment (Alternate)				
WA-AIM	\$1,806,829	\$2,030,677	1,827,299	
Total Cost	\$22,140,004	\$22,168,930	\$26,687,577	
Graduation Alternatives				
Off-Grade Level ELA and Math Smarter Balanced	\$1,431,248	\$626,131	\$726,930	
Reading & Writing HSPE Retakes	\$825,000	\$986,129	-	HSPE Retakes no longer available after 2015–16
Math EOCs	\$3,141,934	\$2,169,351	\$2,878,206	
Collection of Evidence (COE)	\$5,434,000	\$3,260,192	\$7,598,600	Science graduation requirement reinstated
Total Cost	\$10,832,182	\$7,041,803	\$11,203,736	

Other Assessments

Kindergarten Inventory (WaKIDS)	\$607,079	\$580,076	\$779,455	Teaching Strategies Contract; increase due to continued increase in participating schools
English Language Proficiency				
WELPA	\$150,000	\$111,156	\$116,055	2015–16 & 2016–17 costs are for placement screeners used in ELPA21 transition
ELPA21	\$2,327,000	\$2,148,000	\$3,773,300	Increase recognizes full transition away from development grant
Total Cost	\$3,084,079	\$2,839,232	\$4,668,810	
GRAND TOTAL (State Contracts)	\$36,056,265	\$32,049,965	\$42,404,023	

State Board of Education’s Activities and Role in the Washington Comprehensive Assessment Program

Overview

This section of the report summarizes the activities of the State Board of Education (SBE) concerning the state assessment system in 2016 and anticipated actions of the Board in 2017.

Statute directs the SBE to provide consultation to the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) in the development and maintenance of the assessment system ([RCW 28A.655.070\(3\)\(a\)](#)) and identify the scores needed to show proficiency on state assessments and approved alternative assessments, as well as the scores needed on high school exit exams ([RCW 28A.305.130](#)).

In 2015, the [Board identified the scores](#) needed for accountability and for graduation on the Smarter Balanced assessments for English Language Arts (ELA) and Math. The activities of the Board in 2016 followed up on this work primarily by focusing on graduation alternatives to provide a range of options for high school students to meet assessment requirements.

Activities of the Board in 2016

Board actions in 2016 are summarized in Table 13 with links to additional information. Activities included:

- Adopting the Superintendent’s recommended threshold scores on the WA-AIM (Washington Access to Instruction and Measurement, an alternative assessment system aligned with Common Core State Standards for students with significant cognitive challenges) high school science test for use in accountability reporting and the recommended exit exams scores for graduation
- Adopting the Superintendent’s recommended graduation threshold scores for math and English Language Arts Collections of Evidence, the graduation threshold score on the SAT for math and ELA, and the graduation threshold score on the ACT for English Language Arts
- Revisiting the graduation score on the math Smarter Balanced assessment.
- Outreach to school boards, educators, parents and the public about Board activities. Assessments remained a commonly discussed topic at the Board’s public forums.
- Supporting legislative priorities regarding assessments and the career and college ready diploma by urging the Legislature to:
 - “Not just to suspend but to end the biology end-of-course exam as a high school graduation requirement, effective with the class of 2018. A comprehensive science assessment aligned with Next Generation Science Standards should be administered according to the schedule for the assessment developed by the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction”

- “Expand and fund alternatives for students who do not pass the high school SBAC test required for graduation, beginning with the Class of 2019, to include successful completion of transition courses and dual credit courses”

Approval of graduation scores and revisiting the high school math graduation score

In 2016, the SBE approved scores for science WA-AIM, an alternative assessment system for students with significant cognitive challenges. In addition, the Board approved scores on alternative assessments including Collections of Evidence and college admission tests (the SAT and ACT). The SBE supports the development of high quality alternatives to state standardized tests, so students have a range of options for meeting their assessment requirements.

In the January 2015 SBE’s [Position Statement on Assessment](#), the board articulated an “equal impact” approach to setting the score for high school graduation on the new high school assessments. The equal impact approach would set the scores for high school graduation on new exams so that the effect on students is approximately the same as under the previous assessments. Based on this guidance, OSPI developed methodologies for recommending exit exam scores.

For the high school Smarter Balanced assessments, this approach established two important scores: the career and college ready score determined by the Smarter Balanced Consortium which is the same as the Level 3 threshold score, and the graduation score adopted by SBE. These two scores align with the intent of Legislature, as specified in EHB 1450, that there be two student performance standards “one for the purposes of high school graduation that will be established by the state board of education and one that is intended to demonstrate a student’s career and college readiness” (Sec. 1). EHB 1450 further states that “The scores established by the state board of education for the purposes of earning a certificate of academic achievement and graduation from high school may be different from the scores used for the purpose of determining a student’s career and college readiness.” (Sec. 7.) A two cut-score approach accordingly follows the intent, established in rule (WAC 180-17-100) that:

The state’s graduation requirements should ultimately be aligned to the performance levels associated with career and college readiness. During implementation of these standards, the board recognizes the necessity of a minimum proficiency standard for graduation that reflects a standard approaching full mastery, as both students and educators adapt to the increased rigor of common core and the underlying standard of career and college readiness for all students.

In 2015, setting a score for graduation on the Smarter Balanced assessment was complicated by low assessment participation rates by 11th graders. The graduation score for English Language Arts was set based on results of 10th graders. The score for math was set by translating the English Language Arts score to the math scale. At the August 2016 special Board meeting, the SBE revisited the math graduation score to see if 2016 results indicated a need to adjust the score. OSPI examined the 2016 results and found that

although participation on the 11th grade math test had increased over the previous year, there was insufficient data to indicate the math graduation score should be changed.

The Board has held in-depth discussions about the transition and the timing of moving to an alignment of the state’s graduation requirements with the career and college ready Level 3 on high school Smarter Balanced assessments. The feeling of the Board is that such a transition should be accompanied with expanded alternatives to meeting required assessments. Especially during a transition period, more students may need to access alternatives as the system adjusts to career and college readiness for all students. Customarily, such a change in graduation requirements would be phased-in with an entering cohort of ninth grade students.

Hearing from educators, students, and members of the public on assessments

Board meetings provided a public venue for both educators and members of the public to share information and ideas on the assessment system. In addition, the SBE held public forums associated with almost all regular board meeting, where board members met and conversed with members of the public at each board meeting location. The assessment system was a concern of members of the public who visited with board members at the public forums in 2016, although the frequency with which the topic was raised was less in 2016 than in 2015. Topics mentioned included:

- Concern with over-testing
- Maintenance of high standards
- Providing sufficient alternatives to assessments
- Remediation on assessments preventing students from enrolling in other courses
- Allowing time for the system to adjust to new assessments

Table 12: SBE’s Work on Assessments During 2016

(All board meeting materials are posted on the SBE website at: <http://www.sbe.wa.gov/zarchivebm2015.php#.Vl4xcDbTID8>)

Meeting	Activity	Links
May 31	Adoption of WA-AIM high school science test for use in accountability reporting and the recommended exit exams scores for graduation.	Board packet http://www.sbe.wa.gov/documents/BoardMeetings/2016/May31/Packet.pdf
August 15	Adoption of graduation threshold scores for math and English Language Arts Collections of Evidence, the graduation threshold score on the SAT for math and ELA, and the graduation threshold score	Memo http://www.sbe.wa.gov/documents/BoardMeetings/2016/Aug/GraduationScoresMemo.pdf OSPI Presentation http://www.sbe.wa.gov/documents/BoardMeetings/2016/Aug/OSPI_PresentationGradScores.pdf

on the ACT for English Language Arts.
 Revisiting the graduation score on the math Smarter Balanced assessment.

November 2015, and January, March, May, July	Outreach to educators and members of the public at SBE public forums. Members had the opportunity to converse with educators and the public, and the assessment system was often a topic of discussion.	Links to notes on forum discussions since the last report: http://www.sbe.wa.gov/documents/BoardMeetings/2016/Jan/02_NovCommunityForumNotes.pdf http://www.sbe.wa.gov/documents/BoardMeetings/2016/Mar/02CommunityForum.pdf http://www.sbe.wa.gov/documents/BoardMeetings/2016/May/004_CommunityForumNotes.pdf http://www.sbe.wa.gov/documents/BoardMeetings/2016/July/04_MayCommunityForum.pdf
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Activities of the Board for 2017

Anticipated activities include:

- Continued outreach to educators and the public through the SBE’s public forums, where members of the education community and the public often express concerns and ideas about the assessment system
- Consultation to OSPI on the development and implementation of new assessments aligned to the Next Generation Science Standards
- Support work on the development of transition courses, and explore alternatives for students to demonstrate meeting the assessment standard for high school graduation
- Support for SBE legislative priorities for 2017. The Board has not yet approved their 2017 legislative priorities, but the 2016 priorities for assessments may be carried forward.

Conclusion and Next Steps

The Washington Comprehensive Assessment Program is a maturing and stable program. It includes:

- Smarter Balanced ELA and math
- Measurements of Student Progress Science
- End-of-Course math and biology
- ELPA21
- WA-AIM
- NGSS (will be ready to test in spring 2018)
- Graduation assessment alternatives

The assessment system in 2016–2017 is a continuation of the 2015–16 tests. Next Generation Science Standards tests will begin in the 2017–18 school year.

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