



Memorandum

Date: December 24, 2012
To: Senate Committee on Early Learning and K-12 Education
From: Susan Mielke, Committee staff
Re: Common State Student Standards & Assessments

This paper provides information about the two efforts to develop common state standards in language arts, mathematics, and science and how they have or may impact Washington's state student standards (the Essential Academic Learning Requirements or EALRs) and assessments in those academic subjects.

I. Student Standards: Essential Academic Learning Requirements

A. CCSS Language Arts and Mathematics Standards

The CCSS Initiative was a state-led effort by The National Governors Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers to establish a shared set of educational standards for grades K-12 in English language arts and mathematics that states can voluntarily adopt. Forty-five states have formally adopted the CCSS, including Washington¹, and six states have not adopted them.²

States that have adopted CCSS have the option to add additional standards. The website of the SPI provides that Washington will implement the CCSS before making a decision on whether to add more standards.

In the 2011-13 biennial operating budget, the Legislature directed the OSPI to report to the legislature by January 1, 2012, an estimate of costs and a timeline implementation of the CCSS, and any recommendations for enhancing the standards.³

State Superintendent Dorn's 2013-15 budget request includes funding for 1.0 FTE English Language Arts Coordinator in each of the nine Educational Service Districts using a model similar to the currently funded Mathematics and Science Coordinators. The costs are estimated to be \$2.6 million for the biennium.

Washington is participating in one of two consortiums that are developing assessments for the language arts and mathematics CCSS. The assessments will be piloted in 2013 and are to be administered statewide in the 2014-15 school year. Until the 2014-2015 school year, the existing EALRs will be assessed.

B. Next Generation Science Standards

Currently, the National Research Council, the National Science Teachers Association, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and Achieve are working together to develop the next generation of science standards. A second public draft is expected to be released in January 2013 and finalized by March 2013.⁴

The Washington State Legislature authorized the OSPI to participate in the development of the common science standards and assessments and to modify the EALRs and the statewide student assessments in science accordingly. However, the legislative Education Committees must have an opportunity to review any proposed modifications before they are adopted.⁵

II. Washington Statewide Student Assessments

Under federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB)/Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), states must assess students in grades 3-8 and once in high school in reading and mathematics; and in science once in the elementary grades, once in the middle school grades and once in the high school grades.

NCLB/ESEA does not require students pass the high school assessment to graduate from high school; however, this is a Washington state requirement. Since 2008 students have been required to meet the state standard on the high school assessments in reading and writing, to earn a CAA and to graduate from high school. Twenty-five states administered high school exit exams in school year 2011-12, and a 26th state (Rhode Island) is planning to implement an exit exam requirement for the class of 2014.⁶

Generally, the Washington high school assessments are administered in the 10th grade to enable a student that does not meet standard on the assessment sufficient time to retake the assessment, take an approved alternate assessment, or submit a portfolio of student work to demonstrate they can meet the state standard.

Washington is in the process of transitioning from a comprehensive mathematics assessment to two mathematics End-of-Course (EOC) assessments (Algebra I/Integrated Math I and Geometry/ Integrated Math II). The graduating classes of 2013 and 2014 will only be required to meet the state standards on one EOC assessment rather than both to graduate. Beginning with the class of 2015, students will have to meet the state standard on both mathematics EOCs to graduate from high school.

Also beginning with the class of 2015 and beyond, students must pass the high school science assessment to graduate. The science assessment is a biology EOC. However, the Legislature has declared that it does not intend to narrow the statewide science assessment to only biology and at the appropriate time intends to direct the OSPI to develop one or more EOCs in additional science subjects.

State Superintendent Dorn has proposed the Legislature reduce the five required assessments (Reading, Writing, Biology, Algebra, Geometry) to three (Reading/Writing, Biology, and Algebra) for the class of 2015.

A. CCSS Language Arts and Mathematics Standards Assessments

Washington has joined one of two state consortia using a federal grant to develop new language arts and math assessments in grades 3-8 and grade 11 that are, among other things, aligned with the CCSS and test college and career readiness at the high school level. The assessments are required to be ready for use by the 2014-15 school year. To continue in the consortia after the beginning of the 2014-15 school year Washington must agree to use the consortia developed tests as its federal accountability assessments.

B. Next Generation Science Standards Assessments

The Next Generation of Science Standards are still being developed. Currently there are no assessments for these standards in development. The Washington State Legislature has authorized the OSPI to participate in the development of the new science standards and assessments and to adapt state high school science assessments accordingly, as long as the legislative education committees have an opportunity to review any proposed modifications before they are adopted.⁷

Endnotes:

¹ [E2SSB 6696 \(2010\)](#)

² <http://www.corestandards.org/> Adopted: Alabama, Arkansas, Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, North Carolina, North Dakota, New York, Nevada, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Utah, Vermont, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin, Wyoming. Not Adopted: Alaska, Minnesota, Montana, Nebraska, Texas, and Virginia. <http://www.k12.wa.us/CoreStandards/Transition.aspx>

³ [2ESHB 1087 \(budget section 501\)\(2011-12\)](#)

⁴ <http://www.nextgenscience.org/>

⁵ [ESHB 1410 \(2011\)](#)

⁶ [Center on Education Policy: State High School Exit Exams 2012](#), page 2.

⁷ [ESHB 1410 \(2011\)](#)