

Policy #002

Arizona's Key Values in Selecting a New Statewide Assessment

Adopted by the Arizona State Board of Education March 6, 2014

The Arizona State Board of Education (the Board) is responsible for prescribing the minimum course of study for public schools, adopting statewide academic standards, and selecting a statewide assessment to measure the Arizona academic standards. These Board adopted measures are considered by governing boards and charter schools as they fulfill their local responsibility to prescribe curricula, criteria for the promotion of students, and any course of study or competency requirements greater than those prescribed by the Board.

ARS §15-741 requires the Board to adopt and implement a test to measure pupil achievement. A new statewide assessment in math and English language arts must be selected for use in school year 2014-2015, as the contract for the current test is expiring. Complying with the state procurement process, the Board intends to issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the new assessment in Spring 2014 and complete the selection process before the start of school year 2014-2015. Further information about the process can be found at <http://www.azed.gov/state-board-education/new-statewide-assessment/>.

The Board is committed to adopting a new assessment best aligned with Arizona's values and needs. Incorporating feedback from parents, educators, and business and community leaders, the following key values shall be the basis for the requirements of the RFP for the selection of the new statewide assessment.

It is essential that the new statewide assessment:

1. Align to the academic standards adopted by the Arizona State Board of Education
2. Supply criterion referenced summative assessments for grades 3 through 8, and criterion referenced end of course assessments in identified high school math and English language arts courses for implementation in the 2014-15 school year
3. Measure student mastery of the Arizona standards and progress toward college and career readiness
4. Assess, without bias, a range of basic knowledge and lower level cognitive skills and higher order, analytical thinking skills in writing, analysis, and problem-solving across subjects, using multiple assessment methods
5. Provide valid, reliable and timely data to educators and policy makers to advance the academic success of Arizona students and inform the State's accountability measures (A-F School Letter Grades, Move on When Reading, Principal and Teacher Evaluations)
6. Communicate results to students, parents and educators, in a clear and timely manner to guide instruction
7. Provide an accurate perspective of the quality of learning occurring within classrooms and schools
8. Offer educators, students, and families critical tools to improve student achievement, including, but not limited to, formative and interim assessments, sample items and practice tests
9. Allow meaningful national or multistate comparisons of school and student achievement
10. Use 21st Century technology to deliver the assessment, as available infrastructure allows
11. Ensure clarity, transparency, accuracy and security in all aspects of assessment development, deployment, scoring and reporting
12. Provide for content and psychometric evaluation and validation
13. Establish the involvement of Arizona stakeholders – educators, students, parents, institutions of higher education, and business – in the development of the test, test related materials, and achievement levels indicative of college and career readiness
14. Demonstrate accessibility for all students, with optimal access for English language learners and students with special needs
15. Respect Arizona's local control of the selection of classroom instructional materials and recognize that the State Board will not consider any assessment which requires the adoption of a statewide curriculum
16. Deliver the requirements in a cost efficient manner, with accurate and descriptive cost information