

Administrative Memo

Date: January 16, 2014
To: School Administrators
From: Sharon Helwig, Ph.D. - Assistant Commissioner
Subject: CCR-14-002 – New Assessment Plan

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education is committed to raising expectations for students and improving our assessment system through the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium with the goal of preparing every Missouri student for college and career after high school graduation.

Several factors resulted in a budget request that faced serious challenges. The funding request, coupled with the increased time required for assessment at grades three through eleven, created concerns among many stakeholders, including many of the organizations representing teachers and administrators. The support of these organizations is critical in raising Missouri standards and improving our assessment system.

The proposed final assessment plan developed with the department's education partners was presented to and approved by the State Board of Education on Tuesday, January 14. This communication is intended to provide available details to districts. Many specifics are still to be worked out and will be communicated as they become available. See the full report to the state board here:
<http://dese.mo.gov/stateboard/meetings/January/documents/revisedassessmentplan.pdf>

Major points in the revised plan:

- Administer ACT® to 11th grade students
- Maintain EOCs in Algebra I, Algebra II, English II, Biology, Government, and Personal Finance
- Maintain testing requirements for grades 5 and 8 using Smarter Balanced system
- Administer survey assessment in grades 3, 4, 6, 7 using a Missouri developed testing blueprint
- Provide unlimited school district access to Smarter Balanced interim assessments, formative assessment resources/digital library for grades 3-8 English language arts and mathematics
- Maintain Missouri developed science assessments for grades 5 and 8
- Maintain districts' current cost of \$1.80 per test

The following are the advantages of the board approved state assessment plan:

- Allows for more instructional time
- Funds one NCAA compliant administration of the ACT® for each Missouri student in 11th grade
- Produces valid, reliable, and quick test results
- Maintains online testing
- Maintains vertical scale for grades 3-8 for continuation of the Missouri Growth Model
- Maintains ESEA Waiver compliance and federal funding of \$560 million
- Reduces overall budget request

All proposed changes in this plan pertain to school year 2014-15. 2013-14 remains the same.