
BUDGET UNIT BRIEF – FY 2021

Fiscal Services Division

July 1, 2020



Ground Floor, State Capitol Building

Des Moines, Iowa 50319

515.281.3566

Statewide Student Assessment

Purpose and History

Federal law (Every Student Succeeds Act) requires that states assess students in grades three through eight and once in high school using an assessment that aligns to the state's math, reading, and science standards (in Iowa, the Iowa Core). [House File 215](#) (2013 Education Reform Act) established an Assessment Task Force to recommend a statewide assessment to the Department of Education by January 1, 2015, that would meet these and other requirements. A 2017 "Dear Colleague" letter from the federal Department of Education indicated that the assessment in use in Iowa at the time (known as the Iowa Assessment) was noncompliant with requirements, and continued use could have resulted in loss of federal education funding.

The Task Force recommended the [Smarter Balanced Assessment](#); however, the General Assembly acted to have the Department select a different assessment through a new request for proposal in [Senate File 240](#) (2017 Student Statewide Assessment Act). The General Assembly acted again in [House File 2235](#) (2018 Statewide Student Assessment Act) to select the assessment created by University of Iowa's [Iowa Testing Programs](#) (ITP) and administered by ITP's designee as the statewide assessment.

Funding

Previously, the cost of the statewide assessment was paid for by school districts out of the district's general fund. The General Assembly appropriated \$3.0 million to be distributed by the Department of Education to ITP on behalf of school districts to offset the cost of the statewide assessment. Included in this appropriation is an allocation of up to \$300,000 to ITP to offset the costs of administering the statewide assessment at accredited nonpublic schools.

Related Statutes and Administrative Rules

Iowa Administrative Code [281—12](#)

Budget Unit Number

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More Information

Every Student Succeeds Act: www.ed.gov/ESSA

Iowa Testing Programs: itp.education.uiowa.edu/

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