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### STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION — NEW STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT

**New Assessment.** Members of the State Board of Education unanimously voted to begin the rulemaking process for the Iowa Assessment Task Force’s Recommendation 1. Recommendation 1 requires the Smarter Balanced Assessments to be “the new statewide assessment of student progress on a set of core academic indicators in mathematics and reading.” The Department Education will begin the rulemaking process to allow the State to adopt the Smarter Balanced Assessments beginning in the 2016-2017 school year.

**Background.** During the 2013 Legislative Session, [HF 215](#) (Education Reform Appropriations Act) created the Iowa Assessment Task Force. The Task Force was charged with recommending an assessment for implementation by the 2016-2017 school year that meets the following criteria:

- Aligns with the Iowa Core standards;
- Accurately describes student achievement and growth for the purposes of accountability;
- Provides valid, reliable and fair measures of student progress toward college or career readiness; and
- Must have been piloted in Iowa schools.

The Task Force completed its [report](#) in December 2014. In addition to the recommendation to adopt the Smarter Balanced Assessments, the Task Force made five other recommendations, including that the General Assembly create a plan for moving to statewide online administration of assessments and that the Task Force be reconvened as soon as the [new science standards are approved](#) and new assessments are available for review. Last week, the State Board of Education adopted the Next Generation Science Standards; a new science assessment has not yet been recommended.

**Smarter Balanced Assessments.** The Smarter Balanced assessments were developed by a consortium of states and consist of a system that includes tests for mandatory accountability purposes, as well as interim tests for classroom use. The assessments are aligned to the Iowa Core standards and are designed to measure higher-order thinking skills. The assessments also will be computer adaptive to present an individually tailored set of questions to students based on their responses.

**Additional Information.** For more information, refer to the [Smarter Balanced website](#) and the [Iowa Assessment Task Force report](#).

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