



STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION ADOPTS SMARTER BALANCED ASSESSMENTS

Adoption of Rules. On November 18, 2015, the State Board of Education voted unanimously to adopt [state administrative rules](#), ARC 2185C, to put in place a new state assessment, the Smarter Balanced Assessments, to replace the current Iowa Assessments in math and reading beginning in the 2016-17 school year.

Fiscal Impact. There is no fiscal impact to the state, but there is a fiscal impact to school districts by increasing expenditures an estimated \$6.0 to \$7.0 million (see pages 13 and 14 of the [November 2015 Administrative Rules - Fiscal Impact Summaries](#) for more details).

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;
- Must have been piloted in Iowa schools.

The Task Force completed a [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. As of November 18, 2015, 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](#), the [Iowa Assessment Task Force report](#), and [November 2015 Administrative Rules - Fiscal Impact Summaries](#).

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