



# Washington Office of Superintendent of **PUBLIC INSTRUCTION**

## **Washington Assessment Program**

### 1. **Purpose:**

The program is to develop and administer a statewide assessment system to the requisite student population in the state of Washington. The *Every Student Succeeds Act* (ESSA), the 2015 reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, requires states to have a set of high-quality student academic assessments to measure the achievement of all students in the state. Currently, annual assessments for accountability purposes include grades 3 through 8 in English language arts/literacy (ELA) and mathematics, grades 5 and 8 in science, and one grade of high school in the same three content areas. In the same grades and content areas, students with the most significant cognitive disabilities are also assessed each year.

ESSA also requires states administer high-quality assessments in the annual measure of English language proficiency of identified English learners (ELs), inclusive of ELs with the most significant cognitive disabilities.

### 2. **Description of services provided:**

Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), in conjunction with contractors:

- (a) implements activities to develop items/tasks and assessments aligned to the existing learning standards/English language development (ELD) standards
- (b) designs and makes ready for student access the required test booklets or online delivery formats;
- (c) outlines procedures for administration of the tests, including delivery and return of all test materials;
- (d) facilitates scoring of all student work;
- (e) manages the processing of data for purposes of performance reporting.

Alternate assessments are provided for students having the most significant cognitive disabilities identified in their Individualized Education Program (IEP).

### 3. **Criteria for receiving services and/or grants:**

Schools and district participation in the state assessment system is required so that Washington has comprehensive information about student achievement and opportunity gaps.

**Beneficiaries in 2019-20 School Year:**

**Number of School Districts:** All  
**Number of Schools:** All  
**Number of Students:** All  
**Number of Educators:** All  
**Other:** Public N/A

**Number of OSPI staff associated with this funding (FTEs):** 44.7 FTE  
**Number of contractors/other staff associated with this funding:** 11 Contracts

**FY20 Funding: State Appropriation:** \$26,975,000  
**Federal Appropriation:** \$7,650,935  
**Other fund sources:** \$675,000  
**TOTAL (FY20)** \$35,300,935

4. **Are federal or other funds contingent on state funding?**

- No  
 Yes, please explain.

Title 1 funds from the federal government are linked to the state implementation of an assessment program; the financial responsibility for the program is a shared expense with the state.

5. **State funding history:**

<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Amount Funded</b>	<b>Actual Expenditures</b>
FY20	\$26,975,000	\$19,967,775
FY19	\$26,975,000	\$21,083,777
FY18	\$30,421,000	\$30,284,205
FY17	\$36,648,000	\$31,135,798
FY16	\$29,137,000	\$25,556,986
FY15	\$39,644,000	\$34,850,825
FY14	\$38,031,000	\$36,876,421
FY13	\$41,614,000	\$38,512,454
FY12	\$40,822,000	\$40,522,632
FY11	\$31,850,000	\$30,079,794
FY10	\$35,804,000	\$31,503,534
FY09	\$20,968,000	\$22,045,656

6. **Number of beneficiaries (e.g., school districts, schools, students, educators, other) history:**

<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Number of School Districts</b>	<b>Number of Schools</b>	<b>Number of Students</b>	<b>Number of Educators</b>
FY20	All	All	All	All
FY19	All	All	All	All
FY18	295	N/A	1,113,438	N/A
FY17	295	N/A	1,102,579	N/A
FY16	295	N/A	1,086,000	N/A
FY15	295	N/A	1,070,756	N/A
FY14	295	N/A	1,055,517	N/A
FY13	295	N/A	1,047,390	N/A
FY12	295	N/A	1,038,503	N/A
FY11	295	N/A	1,035,535	N/A
FY10	295	N/A	1,032,806	N/A
FY09	295		1,040,750	

7. **Programmatic changes since inception (if any):**

A. *English language arts and mathematics.* In the years 1997, 1998 and 1999, the state began assessment of the content areas of reading, writing, and mathematics at grade 4, 7, and 10, successively. In 2006, as a result of the *No Child Left Behind*, the state began administering additional assessments in reading and mathematics at grades 3, 5, 6, and 8.

Over the past dozen years the state assessments have undergone various modifications in program implementation, both for state management as well as district and school use. The list of modifications include a shortening of tests, moving to online administration rather than paper & pencil, adopting new learning standards (college & career readiness) and an aligned assessment (Smarter Balanced) that is computer adaptive, inclusion of interim assessments and resources for teachers (originally the *Digital Library* followed by *Tools for Teachers*), and quicker return of student score results (less than 3 weeks after testing rather than the start of the next school year). Additionally, High school testing switched to grade 11 beginning in 2015 and reverted back to grade 10 in 2018.

B. *Science.* In 2004, the state added science in grade 8 and 10 followed by grade 5 beginning in 2005. The science learning standards went through two subsequent adoptions, first in 2009 and most recently the 2013 adoption, the *Washington State 2013 K–12 Science Learning Standards* (based on Next Generation Science Standards or NGSS). From the 2004 through the 2017 administration, science assessments were delivered in paper & pencil formats at all three grade levels. In 2012 the high school science assessment began measuring end-of-course (EOC)

knowledge in the content area of Biology, ending with the 2017 administration. In 2018 the science assessment moved to online administration at all three grade levels and the high school science test returned to a comprehensive assessment measuring the breadth of the NGSS learning standards.

- C. *Alternate assessment.* Consistent with legislation, states are allowed to develop and administer an alternate assessment designed for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. The state adopted a portfolio design and administered it from 2001 through the 2014 administration. Improvements over this period were focused on expanding access for students with limited capacity in engaging with the assessment, more robust standards extensions to aid a wider breadth of student demonstration, modifications to data collection to reduce burdens on teachers while establishing greater alignment to grade-level learning standards, and adding performance skill points that are evaluated (scored).

In 2015 a new alternate assessment, the *Washington Access to Instruction & Measurement (WA-AIM)*, was implemented that modified the design to better align with the adopted college & career readiness learning standards in ELA and math. In SY2017–2018, the WA-AIM assessment shifted the science portions (grades 5, 8, and 11) to the *Washington State 2013 K-12 Science Learning Standards.*)

WA-AIM is designed as a performance-based assessment of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. Each content area is assessed against five learning standards, using pre-engagement exposure to the assessable standards to establish the appropriate level of complexity to use with students. Based on the student's success with the pre-engagement activity, the annual measure will be given later in the year at the original selected access point or the next higher version for the standard. The annual administration becomes the measure of the students' learning for the academic year.

- D. *English language proficiency.* In spring 2016, OSPI began administration of its fourth iteration of an English language proficiency assessment. The assessment was developed by the English Language Proficiency Assessment for the 21st Century (ELPA21) consortium, an original ten-state collaborative funded by a U.S. Department of Education grant. The ELPA21 assessment is aligned to the English language proficiency standards adopted by the state in 2013.

8. **Evaluations of program/major findings:**

Statewide closures of school facilities in spring 2020, resulting from COVID-19, interrupted annual testing and access to student performance data. As a result, the state's system-wide information on performance (i.e., the Washington School Improvement Framework or WSIF) was impacted due to a lack of student data.

In collaboration with Washington's peer states, assessment consortia, supporting service providers, and national and state assessment technical advisory committees, OSPI continues its efforts in evaluating the assessment program for quality and efficiency. In assessing the larger impacts of school closures and cancellation of testing OSPI is also engaging in conversations on topics of program modifications.

9. **Major challenges faced by the program:**

Maintaining a high-quality assessment system that is cost-effective continues as a focus of state consideration, but with school closures in spring 2020 OSPI has begun considering what modifications to the state assessment might look like to strive toward further improvements for students and addressing the growing recognition of inequities in educational experiences.

OSPI's participation in multi-state consortia, *Smarter Balanced* and *ELPA21*, has continued to hold costs down while maintaining the tenets of high-quality assessments.

10. **Future opportunities:**

- A. An opportunity already underway is the plan to transition from the present English language proficiency assessment, ELPA21, to assessments provided by the WIDA consortium effective for the 2021-2022 administration year.
- B. OSPI has begun exploring possible modifications to the assessment program to reemphasize assessment for learning, while also having the ability to provide reliable comparisons between states. This will depend on several factors, including the continued impact of COVID, the need to have outcomes consistent with the State's accountability system, and ongoing stakeholder input.

11. **Statutory and/or budget language:**

ESSB 6168, Sec. 513 (1)(a) \$26,975,000 of the general fund—state appropriation for fiscal year 2020, \$26,975,000 of the general fund—state appropriation for fiscal year 2021, \$1,350,000 of the education legacy trust account-state appropriation, and \$15,868,000 of the general fund federal appropriation are provided solely for the development and implementation of the Washington state assessment system.

12. **Other relevant information:**

[Report Card](#)

13. **Schools/districts receiving assistance:**

See [OSPI's Grantee List](#)

14. **Program Contact Information:**

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Assessment and Student Information

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