
SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Senator Benjamin Allen, Chair

2017 - 2018 Regular

Bill No: AB 3233 **Hearing Date:** June 27, 2018
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Version: May 1, 2018
Urgency: No **Fiscal:** Yes
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Subject: Pupil assessment: performance standards.

SUMMARY

This bill requires grade 11 performance standards for the academic indicator on the California School Dashboard to incorporate results from the Smarter Balanced Summative Assessment (SBAC), and authorizes a local education agency that administers a nationally recognized high school assessment that meets specified federal requirements to all students in grade 11 to report those assessments on the California School Dashboard as a local academic indicator.

BACKGROUND

Existing law:

- 1) Establishes the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress, which consists of the following assessments:
 - a) The SBAC in English language arts and mathematics for grades 3 to 8, inclusive, and grade 11 that measures content standards adopted by the State Board of Education (SBE).
 - b) The California Alternative Assessment, which may be administered only to special education students as required by their Individualized Education Program.
 - c) The California Science Tests, which will be field tested in the spring of 2018. (Education Code § 60640)
- 2) Requires the SBE to adopt evaluation rubrics, by October 1, 2016, for all of the following purposes:
 - a) To assist a school district, county office of education or charter school in evaluating its strengths, weaknesses, and areas that require improvement.
 - b) To assist a county superintendent of schools in identifying school districts and charter schools in need of technical assistance, and the specific priorities upon which the technical assistance should be focused.
 - c) To assist the Superintendent of Public Instruction in identifying school districts for which intervention is warranted. (EC § 52064.5)

- 3) Requires the evaluation rubrics to reflect a holistic, multidimensional assessment of school districts and individual schoolsite performance and include all of the state priorities. Existing law requires, as part of the evaluation rubrics, the State Board of Education to adopt standards for school district and individual schoolsite performance and expectations for improvement in regard to each of the state priorities. (EC § 52064.5)

ANALYSIS

This bill requires grade 11 performance standards for the academic indicator on the California School Dashboard to incorporate results from the Smarter Balanced Summative Assessment (SBAC), and authorizes a local education agency (LEA) that administers a nationally recognized high school assessment that meets specified federal requirements to all students in grade 11 to report those assessments on the California School Dashboard as a local academic indicator.

STAFF COMMENTS

- 1) ***Need for the bill.*** According to the author, “California is failing many of our students that are most in need. Only 18% of low-income 4th graders are proficient in math and only 31% of these students are proficient in English across all grade levels. The achievement gap endures, with over 1.2 million disadvantaged African American and Latino students in California below grade level in math, a number greater than total enrollment in 39 other states. When it comes to college and career readiness, over 70% of California high school graduates will need remedial help in Math and English.

The California School Dashboard was created to update and improve transparency and school accountability of public schools across the state. Providing as much information as possible about the school assessments will give parents the ability to make the most informed decision for their child.”

- 2) ***SBAC and Accountability.*** SBAC scores are used as part of the state's accountability system, in particular the school dashboard, which uses SBAC scores along with other state and local performance measures to evaluate school and district performance. According to the California Department of Education, “the Academic Indicator is based on the results of the SBAC for English language arts/literacy (ELA) and mathematics results and applies only to LEAs and schools with grades three through eight. Performance will be calculated and reported separately for ELA and mathematics. At the January 2017 SBE meeting, the SBE approved the "Distance from Level 3 (DF3)" methodology which measures how far (or the distance) each student is from the Level 3 (i.e., Standard Met) Smarter Balanced performance level. Each student's score is compared to Level 3, and all distance results are then averaged to produce a school- and student-group-level average scale score. The results will show, on average, the needed improvement to bring the average student score to Level 3 or the extent to which the average student score meets or exceeds Level 3. Using scale scores, rather than a percentage of students performing at or above Standard Met, provides a more comprehensive picture of how all students at the school are performing on the Smarter Balanced assessments.”

Importantly, the grade 11 Smarter Balanced Summative Assessment (SBAC) score is not included in the Academic Indicator at this point in time. Instead, it is used as a component of the College and Career Indicator. However, in April the State Board of Education (SBE), in an effort to gain federal approval for the state plan for purposes of the federal Every Student Succeeds Act, amended and resubmitted that state plan to include Grade 11 SBAC as part of the Academic Indicator. The U.S. Department of Education has still not approved the state plan, but grade 11 SBAC results would be included in the Academic indicator for English language arts and math for the 2018 Dashboard, unless the SBE elects to use this indicator only for school identification under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

This bill strips the SBE of that authority and disrupts the state's negotiations with the U.S. Department of Education regarding our state plan by requiring grade 11 SBAC scores to be incorporated into the academic indicator on the California School Dashboard. Accordingly, **staff recommends that the bill amended** to delete this provision.

- 3) **Nationally recognized high school assessment requirements.** Federal law, the ESSA, authorizes states to approve a nationally recognized high school assessment that local education agencies (LEAs) may administer in lieu of the existing state-wide assessment (which is the Smarter Balanced Assessment for California), provided the alternative assessment meets or exceeds strict requirements. Federal regulations define "nationally recognized high school assessment" to mean "an assessment of high school students' knowledge and skills that is administered in multiple States and is recognized by institutions of higher education in those or other States for the purposes of entrance or placement into courses in postsecondary education or training programs." The SAT and ACT are common examples of a nationally recognized high school assessment, though they would be required to meet the federal requirements.

This bill would allow a local education agency that offers an assessment pursuant to those provisions and that meets the federal requirements, as outlined below, to include those results on the California School Dashboard as a local indicator if it administers the assessment to all grade 11 students. The federal requirements require that the assessment:

- Is aligned with the state academic standards.
- Addresses the depth and breadth of those standards.
- Is equivalent to or more rigorous than the stateside assessment it is replacing in terms of the following:
 - The coverage of academic content;
 - The difficulty of the assessment;
 - The overall quality of the assessment; and
 - And other aspects of the assessment that the state may establish

- Meets all federal requirements that apply to the statewide assessment.
- Produces valid and reliable data on student academic achievement with respect to all high school students and each subgroup on high school students in the local education agency (LEA) that:
 - Are comparable to achievement data produced by the statewide assessment (i.e., Smarter Balanced Summative Assessment (SBAC));
 - Are expressed in terms consistent with the states academic achievement standards; and
 - Provide unbiased, rational, and consistent differentiation among schools within the state for the purpose of the state accountability system.

In addition, the LEA must also notify all parents of high school students it serves:

- That the LEA intends to use an alternative assessment in place of the SBAC in grade 11;
 - How parents and, as appropriate, students may provide meaningful input regarding the LEAs request; and
 - Of any effect of such a request on the LEA's instructional program.
- 4) ***Related legislation.*** AB 1951 (O'Donnell, 2018) requires the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) to approve, by an unspecified date, one or more nationally recognized high school assessments that a LEA may, at its own discretion, administer in lieu of the grade 11 SBAC, commencing with the 2019-20 school year. AB 1951 is pending in the Senate Appropriations Committee.

SUPPORT

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OPPOSITION

None received

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