

Executive Numbered Memo 007-2012-13 - Essential Skills graduation requirements during transition to Smarter Balanced

February 8, 2013

TO: School District and ESD Superintendents

RE: Essential Skills graduation requirements during transition to Smarter Balanced

The Department has received many questions regarding the upcoming transition to the Smarter Balanced assessment and the impact on Essential Skills graduation requirements. We would like to provide clarification to the field regarding these requirements and what will be expected of students during the transition to this new assessment.

As stated in Oregon Administrative Rule (OAR) 581-22-0615 (Assessment of Essential Skills), students must be allowed to meet the Essential Skills graduation requirement using any of the approved assessment options that are in place during their 9th grade through 12th grade year. Students must not be required to use achievement standards that are higher than those approved as of March 1 of the student's 8th grade year.

Students who have already met the Essential Skills graduation requirement on any of the currently approved assessment options may use that evidence for graduation purposes through the transition to Smarter Balanced. Current high school students will not be required to meet an achievement standard on the Smarter Balanced assessment in order to graduate. This is true for all students enrolled in grades 9 through 12 in the 2012-2013 school year, and will hold true for students enrolled in grades 9 through 12 in the 2013-2014 school year as well.

The current list of approved Essential Skills assessment options will continue to be available for students to meet graduation requirements during the transition from OAKS to Smarter Balanced. As is stated above, this is true for all students enrolled in grades 9 through 12 in the 2012-2013 school year, and will hold true for students enrolled in grades 9 through 12 in the 2013-2014 school year as well. As part of the transition, results from the Smarter Balanced field test (spring of the 2013-2014 school year) will be used to establish equivalent levels of rigor, as compared to the "meets" achievement levels on OAKS.

Note that while students are able to use evidence that was collected prior to the transition to Smarter Balanced for graduation purposes, students enrolled in grade 11 during the 2014-2015 school year will still be required to take the Smarter Balanced assessment for federal accountability purposes.

The current list of approved Essential Skills assessment options is available in Appendix K of the [Test Administration Manual](#).

If you have questions about the Essential Skills requirements, please contact [Derek Brown](#), Manager for the Assessment of the Essential Skills at 503-947-5841.