

## STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION – TOPIC SUMMARY

**Topic:** ELPA21 Field Test and Transition Plan

**Date:** August 20, 2014

**Staff/Office:** David Bautista and Martha I. Martinez, Education Equity unit

**Action Requested:**  Informational Only  Adoption Later  Adoption  Adoption/Consent Agenda

### ISSUE BEFORE THE BOARD:

Update on the ELPA21 project, including:

- Supplemental funding and accelerated timeline
- Field test planning
- Work group for recommendations during testing transition for Title III accountability and EL student testing and placement decisions

### BACKGROUND:

The U.S. Department of Education has awarded the English Language Proficiency Assessment for the 21st Century (ELPA21) consortium an additional \$2.8 million in funding, bringing ELPA21's overall grant award to \$9 million. Oregon is the lead state of the eleven states participating in the consortium. The original Enhanced Assessment Grant, awarded in 2012, is being used to develop a research-based screener and summative assessment to accurately and consistently measure the English proficiency of English Learners (ELs). The supplemental funding will be used to accelerate the summative assessment implementation plan for consortium states.

The ELPA21 states — Arkansas, Florida, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Nebraska, Ohio, Oregon, South Carolina, Washington, and West Virginia — have made significant progress in the last year toward achieving the consortium's established goals. The states have developed a governance system, collaborated with other assessment consortia on operating platforms, and initiated test item development. The new target goal for implementation of ELPA21's summative assessment is 2015-16. Many of the consortium states will begin assessing new, more rigorous academic standards in 2014-15. With an English language proficiency assessment aligned to more rigorous ELP standards, member states will be positioned to understand and meet the needs of their ELs a year earlier than initially planned.

The goal of ELPA21 is to provide online assessments that best measure ELs' mastery of the communication demands of the Common Core State Standards and the Next Generation Science Standards. The assessments will be aligned to new ELP standards that highlight the productive, receptive and interactive English language skills that students need in light of the more rigorous academic standards in English Language Arts, Mathematics and Science. As required by federal law, ELPA21 will also continue to measure English proficiency in the four language domains (reading, writing, speaking, and listening.). Additionally, the assessments will include more interactive item styles, especially for speaking and listening; reduce turnaround time on reporting results; improve efficiency of data collection and management; and reduce administrative burdens on school and district staff.

With the summative assessment now scheduled to be operational in the spring of 2015-16, the ELPA21 field test is scheduled for winter of 2014-15. A representative student sample from each ELPA21 state will participate in the ELPA21 field test. The field test vendor for ELPA21, Questar, is currently developing the field test plan in collaboration with the ELPA21 states.

Because student results on the field test cannot be used to make EL exiting decisions, some students will take both the Oregon ELPA and the ELPA21 field test during the 2014-15 school year. As Oregon transitions from our current ELPA to ELPA21, there are several other issues related to student testing, student exiting decisions and Title III accountability that will require thoughtful consideration and policy recommendations regarding how Oregon will want to address these matters during the testing transition years. The Oregon Department of Education is in the process of convening a work group of key stakeholders from representative EL districts across the state and ODE staff to consider these issues and formulate policy recommendations that would be shared with stakeholders throughout Oregon prior to submitting a formal ELPA21 transition proposal to the federal government. ODE used a similar process to draft its proposal to revise the state's Annual Measureable Achievement Objectives (AMAOs) for Title III accountability in 2013-14 and 2014-15. This proposal, which was recently approved by the federal government, enables the state to adopt a more valid measurement approach for Title III accountability than was previously in effect, including the use of a student growth model for the calculation of AMAO 1 (progress on English proficiency) and AMAO 3 (academic achievement).

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

- No recommendation at this time.