



RULES COMMITTEE DELAYS SMARTER BALANCED ASSESSMENTS

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 and recommended adoption of the Smarter Balanced Assessments as the new statewide assessment, replacing the Iowa Assessments (formerly known as the Iowa Test of Basic Skills). Additionally, 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 January 2016, 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.

Adoption of Rule. On November 18, 2015, the State Board of Education voted unanimously to adopt 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 this rule change will impact school districts by increasing expenditures by an estimated \$6.0 to \$7.0 million statewide (see pages 14 and 15 of the [January 2016 Administrative Rules - Fiscal Impact Summaries](#) for more details). The Department of Education requested \$10.0 million in State funding for FY 2017 to fund the Smarter Balanced Assessments. The Governor made no recommendation.

Session Delay. During the January 2016 [Administrative Rules Review Committee \(ARRC\)](#) meeting, the Committee approved a session delay for this rule. Barring legislative action, the rule will become effective upon adjournment of the 2016 Legislative Session. The rule was originally scheduled to become effective on January 13, 2016.

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