



What is the new test for tenth-graders?

Every spring, tenth-graders take the High School Graduation Qualifying Examination (HSGQE) to see if they are eligible for a diploma. Starting this year, the test will be combined with a tenth-grade standards-based assessment (SBA).

Think of it as two tests in one. Students will get two sets of scores, one for the HSGQE and one for the SBA. Just like before, only the scores on the HSGQE will determine whether students are eligible for a high school diploma. The SBA scores will not affect eligibility.

The HSGQE tells us if students have mastered the essential skills that all high school graduates should have. Scores are recorded as proficient or not proficient. Students must score proficient on each section – reading, writing and math – to be eligible for a high school diploma.

SBAs tell us how well students meet academic standards for that grade level. They show us where students need help and how schools are performing. SBA scores are recorded in four categories: advanced, proficient, below proficient, and far below proficient. Students already take an SBA in grades three through nine.

Why is the state doing this?

The federal government requires states to give an SBA at least once in grades ten, eleven or twelve. We chose tenth grade because that naturally follows from our tests in grades three to nine.

Why combine the SBA with the HSGQE?

The alternative was to have two tests, taking up more time of students and teachers.

Will the test take longer?

Probably not. The new test has about the same number of questions as the former test. Plus, more of the questions are multiple choice, and fewer questions require a long answer. The test does not have a time limit.

How can one test meet the needs of two tests?

Some questions will be scored only for the HSGQE. Some questions will be scored only for the SBA. The remaining questions will count for both tests.