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September 20, 2017

**GUIDANCE MEMORANDUM #17-22**

**TO:** Nevada School District Superintendents

**COPY:** State Test Directors

**FROM:** Steve Canavero, Ph.D.  
Superintendent of Public Instruction

**SUBJECT:** End of Course Assessments: Approved Recommendations

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At the September 12th State Board of Education Meeting the Board approved recommendations related to the transition from End of Course (EOC) examinations to End of Course finals as required by AB 7 from the 2017 legislative session. This memo is to provide timely information, while the Department continues with adopting regulations, on the transition of the EOC examinations from a high-stakes graduation requirement to a medium-stakes end of course final.

*Decisions of the State Board of Education*

At its September meeting the State Board was asked to weigh in on three issues related to EOC finals. The first issue was the courses for which an EOC final will be administered. The second matter concerned the percent an EOC final would count toward a student's course grade. The third issue was whether there would be a minimum score required to pass the course.

*Courses of Study for Which an End of Course Final will be Administered*

AB 7 requires that the State Board adopt the courses of study for which an end-of-course final must be administered:

**Sec. 41.3. 1.** The State Board *shall* adopt regulations that prescribe the: (a) Courses of study for which an end-of-course final must be administered.

At the September 12<sup>th</sup> State Board Meeting the Board approved the Department's recommendation that an EOC final be administered in the associated courses:

- EOC Math 1 - Algebra 1 or an equivalent course that has been state approved
- EOC Math II - Geometry or an equivalent course that has been state approved
- EOC Integrated Math I - Integrated Math I or an equivalent course that has been state approved

- EOC Integrated Math II - Integrated Math II or an equivalent course that has been state approved
- EOC ELA - English 10 or an equivalent course that has been state approved

### *Science*

Science is a federally required exam in graded 5, 8 and high school---the high school Science assessment was developed as the EOC Science exam. This exam will remain the federally reported Nevada Science assessment currently offered in grade 10. It will not be an EOC final.

Administration of the high school Science assessment will be administered online, scored by the vendor, and reported by the vendor. The high school Science assessment is based on life science content and will be made available to accommodate district testing needs.

The EOC Science will have a participation only requirement but the State Board reserved the right to revisit that decision in the future. The high school Science assessment will be a point earning measure used within the Nevada School Performance Framework.

### *Percentage of Final Grade*

AB 7 requires that the State Board adopt a percentage of the grade the EOC final will count for in the associated course:

**Sec. 41.3. 1.** The State Board *shall* adopt regulations that prescribe the: (b) Amount, expressed as a percentage of the pupil's overall grade in the course of study or other weight, that the end-of-course final must comprise when determining the overall grade of a pupil in the course for which the end-of-course final is administered.

In its presentation to the Board the Department shared research from across the country showing the range of percentages for similar End-of-Course finals. The range was between 15% to 30% of the student's final grade.

The State Board adopted a phased implementation of the EOC final:

- 2017-18 School Year --No percentage requirement, district discretion to set a percentage of the student's final grade if it chooses to.
- 2018-19 School Year - 10% of course grade
- 2019-20 School Year - 15% of course grade
- 2020-21 School Year and beyond - 20% of course grade

For the 2017-18 school year there is a requirement to pass the course but no state requirement that the EOC Final is passed or that the final count for a specific percentage of a student's grade. Starting in 2018-19 the EOC final will count at 10% of the student's final grade and increase 5 percentage points each year until reaching 20% of the grade in 2020-21. Students will additionally be required to pass the associated classes.

### *Minimum Score Required to Pass the Course*

AB 7 states that the State Board may adopt a minimum score necessary to pass the associated course:

**Sec. 41.3. 2.** The State Board *may* adopt regulations that prescribe the minimum score a pupil must attain on an end-of-course final to receive credit for the course of study for which the end-of-course examination is administered.

Based on district feedback the Department recommended to the State Board that the Board not adopt a minimum score at this time and study the impact of a minimum score after results from the administration of the EOC finals are available and impact data can be reviewed. The State Board accepted this recommendation and did not adopt a minimum score to pass the associated course at this time. The Department will have the authority to request EOC final results data from districts. This data will be analyzed to understand how to best approach setting minimum scores in the future.

The Department will have the authority to conduct an audit of EOC final results and course grades. Districts may be asked to complete this audit by the Department.

### **Next Steps for EOC Final Implementation**

#### *Administration of EOC Finals*

#### **2018-2019 on beyond**

Administration of the End of Course Final during the 2017-18 school year will serve as an opportunity for teachers and students to become familiar with the test in a locally administered and scored setting under the existing participate in the assessment and pass the course approach. This approach provides ample time to prepare for 2018-2019 when the EOC final will count for 10% of the student's final grade.

As course finals, the EOCs will be available beginning early fall semester throughout the year. EOC finals will be made available for summer school sessions. The mode of administration will be paper and pencil for all EOCs except the written portion of the ELA final. The writing ELA final will be administered online and scored by an external vendor to ensure consistency in scoring. The writing exam will be administered earlier in the school year to allow DRC to report scores and districts to include the writing score as part of the students' final grades.

The locally administered and scored paper and pencil EOC finals are multiple-choice and allow for timely scoring so that those results can be included in the student's final grade. Locally scored and administered EOC finals provide teachers the opportunity to review items aligned to rigorous standards.

NDE will provide paper and pencil EOC finals. English Language Arts writing assessment will be administered online and scored by the vendor. Districts are responsible for compiling scores for all math and non-writing ELA student EOC finals and will decide how scores are provided to students and parents.

#### *Test Security*

The Department will provide specialized training for material handling and scoring, and will remain an active collaborator with districts in all aspects of EOC final logistics. Test security for the EOC finals is covered by the Department's test security plan and district and school security plans which are submitted annually. Storage and destruction of EOC finals are covered under these agreements and procedures.

All breaches of test security will be reported to and investigated by the Nevada Department of Education. All cases of student academic dishonesty (cheating) will fall under the purview of district progressive discipline plans.

#### *Nevada School Performance Framework*

Starting with 2018-2019, EOC finals (ELA, Math 1, Math 2, Integrated Math 1, and Integrated Math 2) will not be included in the Nevada School Performance Framework (NSPF). The EOC Science assessment is not transitioning to a final and will remain an online, vendor scored assessment that will be included in the NSPF.

#### *Students That Will Be Assessed*

All students who are enrolled in aligned courses will be assessed. This includes students who failed the course and are retaking the same EOC final aligned course.

#### *Impact on Students Who Did Not Previously Pass the EOC Exam*

Regardless of cohort, students who did not previously achieve the formerly required minimum level of performance on the EOC exams, but did pass the class, are not required to re-take the EOCs. This includes students who passed the course, yet did not take the aligned EOC exam.

#### *End-of-Course Final Item Refresh*

Plans for future development are under discussion and districts will be part of this important planning process.

Please direct any questions, or for more information contact: Peter Zutz at [pzutz@doe.nv.gov](mailto:pzutz@doe.nv.gov)

