



February 27, 2015

Ben Cannon, Executive Director
Higher Education Coordinating Commission
775 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Director Cannon:

As leaders of Oregon's seventeen community colleges, we strongly support our state's high academic standards in our K-12 schools and recognize the importance of the new College and Career Readiness standards and corresponding assessments in identifying a student's readiness for credit-bearing, college-level coursework. We applaud the commitment of our K-12 partners to better prepare students for success beyond high school. We wish to demonstrate our ongoing commitment to improved secondary and postsecondary alignment that supports student success through a landmark placement test exemption policy.

In order to implement this placement test exemption policy, solutions must be found to address data system limitations which impact high school and community college data sharing. In the state of Oregon, public universities typically rely on high school transcripts as a component of the admissions process. Community colleges, which are open-access, do not require or receive high school transcripts into their data systems, and lack the personnel or technology to accomplish transcript review (except in the case of specific, very limited programs). A Technical Workgroup has been established to clarify what is needed, and what is possible, for the Smarter Balanced assessment scores and attendant information required for this policy to be transmitted and received. A state investment may be necessary in order to enable this effort to succeed.

Assuming the technical issues are resolved, the placement test exemption policy is as follows: High school students graduating in 2016 and intending to enter an Oregon community college will be exempt from placement testing in the academic year immediately following the test if they have earned an Achievement Level 3 or 4 on the Smarter Balanced grade 11 assessment in Mathematics and/or English and have successfully completed relevant accelerated college credit options in Mathematics and/or English, respectively, during senior year. These include dual credit, early college, local accelerated credit models, and exam achievement in AP or IB courses. Upon matriculation, students may be allowed to enroll in courses higher than entry-level through local institutional placement processes (additional measures, targeted testing, etc.). Specifically:

- Students achieving Level 3 or 4 in mathematics may enroll directly in entry-level mathematics courses (100-level).



- Students achieving Level 3 or 4 in English may enroll directly in a WR 121 or equivalent course that meets a general education English/writing requirement.
- Students who score below Level 3 in mathematics or English/Language Arts require opportunities to become college-ready by grade 12 through college-readiness courses.
- Students who score below Level 3, complete additional coursework in senior year, retest on the Smarter Balanced Assessment during grade 12 (if available) then earn a Level 3 or 4 may enroll in an entry-level college mathematics or English course in the academic year immediately following achievement on the assessment.

Additional options for meeting 12th grade conditions may be developed locally.

This agreement will apply to the high school graduating classes of 2016 through 2018. It will be reconsidered and potentially renewed or revised in winter 2018 based on relevant data gathered on the Smarter Balanced assessment, such as a) correlations with other assessment results, b) grade 12 student performance, and c) student performance in subsequent college courses.

We recognize the importance of this policy in Oregon as it supports student pipeline transitions, and stand ready to serve our state and our communities by offering an efficient path that supports students' academic achievements and successes. We hope this effort will incentivize students to transform their senior year into one of college preparation, motivate them to attend college sooner rather than later, and minimize the need for developmental education. It is our great hope that by working together, Oregon will make great strides forward to meet our 40-40-20 goal.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Joanne Truesdell". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the left.

Joanne Truesdell, Chair
Oregon Presidents' Council