



September 2016

# High School Assessment in a New Era: What Policymakers Need to Know

Achieve has partnered with the Center for Assessment to release a new brief to help state policymakers identify key action steps to consider as they make decisions about high school assessments. The passage of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) gives states a new opportunity in how they approach high school assessment. Most significantly, it will allow states to use "nationally-recognized high school academic assessments" such as college entrance exams (ACT or SAT) as their sole high school assessment for accountability purposes, and give states the option to permit individual districts to do so in lieu of the state high school test.

Given these changes, states now face important decisions about which high school assessments to use and for what purposes. In order to approach these decisions in a thoughtful manner and find the best solution for their state, there are several critical issues that policymakers need to understand. This brief helps state policymakers make sense of these issues as they move forward with decisionmaking around high school assessments.

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## *Study: Two in Five High Schools Don't Offer Physics*

A recent analysis of data from the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights by the Education Week Research Center found that across the country, two in five high schools do not offer physics courses to students. The analysis further showed that some states exhibit far worse rates than others; about 70 percent of high schools in both Alaska and Oklahoma do not offer physics, while nearly 60 percent of schools in Florida and Utah do not offer the course. Because physics is a key foundational course for many STEM disciplines, advocates argue it is critical that all high schools offer the course.



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## *Achieve Announces Launch of EQUiP Peer Review Panel for Science: Apply Now!*

Earlier this week, Achieve announced the launch of an EQUiP Peer Review Panel for Science. The goal of the [EQUiP Peer Review Panel for Science](#) will be to identify high-quality lessons and units that are designed for the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). Building on the work of the EQUiP Peer Review Panels for mathematics and English Language Arts, the science peer reviewers will evaluate lessons and units in their area of expertise and, collectively, will cover grades K-12. Any lessons and units that are determined to be of high quality will be publicly shared via [www.nextgenscience.org](http://www.nextgenscience.org) so that educators and curriculum developers across all states and districts can benefit from these materials.



Educators interested in joining the peer review panel should complete [the online application](#) by September 23.

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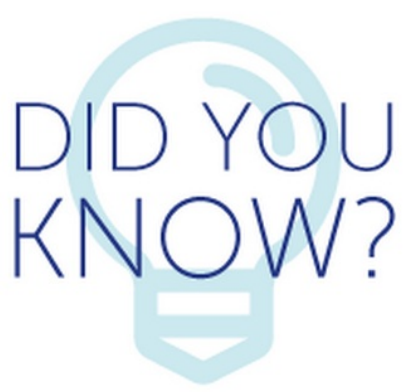
## *Are Dual-Enrollment Programs Overpromising?*

"The popularity of dual-enrollment programs has soared nationally as high school students clamor to try college-level work. But the movement is dogged by questions about one of its key selling points: that students can get a jump-start on college by transferring those credits."



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21

states publicly report data on students' persistence in postsecondary education. Learn more and see if your state is one of them [here](#).

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*All students should graduate from high school ready for college, careers, and citizenship.*

