

**PROFICIENCY LEVELS OF STATEWIDE ASSESSMENTS**

2014 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

**Chief Sponsor: Howard A. Stephenson**

House Sponsor: Bradley G. Last

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**LONG TITLE**

**General Description:**

This bill imposes requirements regarding proficiency levels of statewide assessments.

**Highlighted Provisions:**

This bill:

► requires the State Board of Education to:

- establish four proficiency levels for each statewide assessment;
- develop proficiency level descriptors for each proficiency level of each statewide assessment;
- develop proficiency level descriptors for the top two proficiency levels that describe the knowledge and skills a student should obtain to be on a trajectory for postsecondary success;
- set cut scores for statewide assessments using the National Assessment of Educational Progress as a benchmark; and
- establish procedures for developing proficiency levels, proficiency level descriptors, and cut scores that provide for the active participation of educators, parents, higher education representatives, and employers.

**Money Appropriated in this Bill:**

None

**Other Special Clauses:**

None



28 **Utah Code Sections Affected:**

29 ENACTS:

30 **53A-1-604.5**, Utah Code Annotated 1953



32 *Be it enacted by the Legislature of the state of Utah:*

33 Section 1. Section **53A-1-604.5** is enacted to read:

34 **53A-1-604.5. Proficiency levels, proficiency level descriptors, and cut scores for**  
35 **statewide assessments.**

36 (1) As used in this section:

37 (a) "Board" means the State Board of Education.

38 (b) "Cut score" means the lowest scale score of a proficiency level of a statewide  
39 assessment.

40 (c) "NAEP" means the National Assessment of Educational Progress.

41 (d) "Proficiency level descriptor" means a description of the knowledge and skills of a  
42 student who scores within a certain proficiency level on a statewide assessment.

43 (e) "Statewide assessment" means an online computer adaptive test:

44 (i) of student achievement in language arts, mathematics, or science; and

45 (ii) which is administered statewide under this part.

46 (2) The board shall:

47 (a) identify and generally describe four levels of proficiency that are applicable to all  
48 statewide assessments; and

49 (b) use the general descriptions of the four proficiency levels as a guideline to develop  
50 proficiency level descriptors for each statewide assessment.

51 (3) (a) The board shall develop proficiency level descriptors for each statewide  
52 assessment.

53 (b) For the top two levels of proficiency of each statewide assessment, the board shall  
54 develop proficiency descriptors that describe the knowledge and skills a student should obtain  
55 to be:

56 (i) on a trajectory for postsecondary success; and

57 (ii) prepared for entry-level course work without remediation in postsecondary  
58 education or training.

59           (4) (a) The board shall set the cut scores for the top three proficiency levels for each  
60 statewide assessment.

61           (b) In setting cut scores for statewide assessments of language arts or mathematics  
62 achievement, the board shall use the NAEP as a benchmark so that the percentage of students  
63 who are proficient in language arts or mathematics as measured by a statewide assessment is  
64 approximately equal to the percentage of Utah students who are proficient in the same subject  
65 as measured by the NAEP.

66           (5) The board shall establish procedures for developing proficiency levels, proficiency  
67 level descriptors, and cut scores for statewide assessments that provide for the active  
68 participation of educators, content area specialists, parents, higher education representatives,  
69 and employers.

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**Legislative Review Note**  
as of 1-10-14 1:59 PM

**Office of Legislative Research and General Counsel**