Information from Our Partners

Building Inclusive Schools Through Change Management

Join the Washington Leading Inclusive Schools 2026–2027 Community of Practice, a collaborative learning opportunity focused on strengthening school systems and improving outcomes for students with disabilities. Through five virtual sessions and a one-day, in-person conference, participants will engage in ongoing professional learning and collaborative problem-solving to advance inclusive school practices.

Upcoming Session: November 12, 7:30 a.m.

Ted Kalmus, MPA, will lead a discussion on change management and educator retention. Designing and sustaining inclusive schools requires meaningful changes in how schools operate, how educators collaborate and communicate, and how instructional time is organized to support all learners. These changes should result in visible, measurable practices that reflect a commitment to inclusion.

This session will explore practical strategies for leading and sustaining these changes, with particular attention to supporting teachers as they adapt to new and expanded roles in educating students with disabilities.

Register for the November 12 session.

Learning Standards Updates

Science Initial Adoption

The Initial Adoption of the Washington State K–12 Learning Standards for Science were released on October 15, 2026 in Bulletin 035-26.

The science learning standards: continue to use the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), include new Environment and Sustainability standards, update the numbering/coding, include multiple formats for displaying the standards, and highlight science experiences for students. The initial adoption learning standards for Science are available in a word, PDF, and excel spreadsheet format.

Educators are encouraged to review the initial adoption set of standards, then provide feedback via a survey. This feedback will be reviewed to determine updates for final adoption and the resources and support needed for implementation. The science standards documents and survey can be found here: Washington State Learning Standards Review.

Physical Education Public Comment

The draft Washington State K–12 Learning Standards for Physical Education were released on October 15, 2026. These standards build from the 2024 National SHAPE standards for physical

education and reflect updates to naming structure, formatting, and content. The Public Comment drafts are offered for educator and public input through a survey. The Physical Education standards draft and survey can be found on the Washington State Learning Standards Review webpage.

Educational Technology and Computer Science Learning Standards Begin Review Phase

The Washington State K–12 Learning Standards for Educational Technology and for Computer Science are beginning the learning standards review process. Both content areas have had national standards updates since they were last adopted in 2018. Educators that use these standards are encouraged to share their feedback and input on the current set of standards to help support the revision process. The surveys can be found on the Washington State Learning Standards Review webpage.

Learning Standards Timeline

For questions about where all content areas are in the review and revision process, please check out the timeline: Learning Standards Timeline.

Final Adoption of Math, English Language Arts and Family Guides

The Washington State K–12 Learning Standards for Math and English Language Arts were formally adopted this summer. Educators have one year to support implementation of the new standards before they are required to be taught in the 27–28 school year. The standards are in multiple formats and include an excel spreadsheet to filter and sort along with connections to the Smarter Balanced Assessments and WIDA Language Standards.

There are new K–8 family guides for Math and English Language Arts. These guides are intended to help families understand the key learning in each grade, activities that can be done at home and support the partnership between families and school. The standards and the family guides can be found on these pages:

Mathematics K–12 Learning Standards

English Language Arts Learning Standards

Answers to your WA-AIM Questions

This issue's question is: My student is good at math and instruction for this student is based on the grade-level standards although it is adapted to better meet how he learns. He really struggles with language development and is definitely eligible for the WA-AIM on ELA. Can we assess him on the SBA for math and the WA-AIM for ELA?

Answer: No. IEP teams must choose ONE testing pathway for all state and district assessments. A student's expected performance is not a consideration in whether a student is eligible for an alternate assessment pathway. The eligibility criteria include

- having a documented cognitive disability that affects intellectual potential. It is not a new or separate category of disability.
- requiring extensive, repeated, individualized instruction and support that is not of a temporary or transient nature.
- using substantially adapted materials or individualized methods of accessing information in alternative ways to acquire, maintain, generalize, demonstrate, and transfer skills across multiple settings, including school, workplace, community, and home.
- scoring at least two (2) standard deviations below the mean on standardized norm-referenced assessments for adaptive behavior **and** intellectual functioning.

So, the student above may be best served by testing on the SBA accommodations for both ELA and Math to retain the rigor and challenge, but the IEP team will need to consider the eligibility criteria found in the Guidelines for Statewide Accountability Assessments to decide on a singular assessment pathway for the student.