

student receives information about their readiness to make successful transitions to college and work after high school from one assessment. If a student scores below a 5 in the Reading for Information and/or Applied Mathematics test, it provides critical information in terms of necessary coursework to be completed during the student's remaining time in high school in order to be prepared for first-year college courses. The student also receives information about whether he or she has the skills that businesses expect of entering workers through the WorkKeys Readiness Level. This also provides valuable information in course planning so, if necessary, students can take the coursework to ensure that they have the workforce skills when they graduate from high school. Since it is a national exam, WorkKeys results and certificates are also portable throughout our highly mobile country and mean the same thing regardless of the state in which our students ultimately choose to work or attend post-secondary programs.

The bottom line is that the WorkKeys exam has the potential to inspire and encourage students to higher levels of achievement while providing desired accountability and information for prospective employers and universities, whereas the HSGQE encourages apathy and low expectations. Further, the HSGQE causes significant harm to the small number of students who, largely due to special needs or language acquisition challenges, are unable to pass and are thus denied a diploma.

Rather than artificially set a pass/fail mark on this exam for which such a distinction was never intended, we propose instead that the final scores received by the student, after however many attempts the student makes while in high school to achieve higher scores, be placed on the transcript and the diploma. The diploma could also be printed in such a way that an explanation of those scores is printed on the back of the diploma or transcript to provide that information to prospective employers.

We encourage the State Board of Education and Early Development, along with Alaska legislators, to take this bold step in increasing both the academic expectations and the relevancy of state assessments for Alaska's students.

**SUBJECT: 4 AAC 33.310 Applications; 4 AAC 33.320 Grant Awards; 4 AAC 33.330 Reporting Requirements, Regarding Quality School Funding Grants**

This regulation does not directly impact the Anchorage School District as our Quality School Grant exceeds \$10,000. We have never found the required application and report to be particularly onerous for our district.