

# BOARD OF REGENTS BRIEFING PAPER

**1. AGENDA ITEM TITLE: *Handbook* Revision: NSHE Placement Policy – ACT ELA Benchmark Score**

**MEETING DATE: September 6-7, 2018**

**2. BACKGROUND & POLICY CONTEXT OF ISSUE:**

Existing Board policy requires that degree-seeking students who meet certain requirements, including meeting or exceeding the English or mathematics benchmark scores on specified college readiness assessments, be placed into a college-level English or mathematics course and are exempt from being placed into any form of remedial instruction. The college-readiness assessments include the ACT, Nevada's College and Career Readiness (CCR) assessment selected by the State Board of Education. To be eligible for graduation, all Nevada students, free of charge, must participate in Nevada's CCR assessment during their junior year of high school. In 2018, students will take ACT with Writing and receive an English Language Arts (ELA) score on the ACT in addition to the single English score.

The benchmark scores for the ACT in Board policy for English and mathematics are the college and career readiness benchmark scores set forth by the ACT and used nationwide. The ACT now has benchmark scores for ELA, which combines the student's achievement on the English, language and writing tests. System staff recommends revising Board policy to include ACT's college readiness benchmark for ELA as one of the benchmark scores for placement into college-level English.

**3. SPECIFIC ACTIONS BEING RECOMMENDED OR REQUESTED:**

Amend *Title 4, Chapter 16, Section 1* to include ACT's college readiness benchmark (20) for ELA as one of the benchmark scores for placement into college-level English. (See the attached policy proposal.)

**4. IMPETUS (WHY NOW?):**

Nevada students are taking the ACT (Nevada's required College and Career Readiness assessment) with writing in 2018 will receive an ELA score.

**5. CHECK THE NSHE STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL THAT IS SUPPORTED BY THIS REQUEST:**

- Access (Increase participation in post-secondary education)**
- Success (Increase student success)**
- Close the Achievement Gap (Close the achievement gap among underserved student populations)**
- Workforce (Collaboratively address the challenges of the workforce and industry education needs of Nevada)**
- Research (Co-develop solutions to the critical issues facing 21<sup>st</sup> century Nevada and raise the overall research profile)**
- Not Applicable to NSHE Strategic Plan Goals**

**INDICATE HOW THE PROPOSAL SUPPORTS THE SPECIFIC STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL**

While the policy revision is technical in nature to incorporate the ACT's new ELA score into existing Board policy, the revision supports the Board's policy to place high school graduates into college-level English and mathematics courses if they meet certain criteria. This policy supports student access and success and helps close the achievement gap among underserved student populations as students who are able to avoid remedial courses have higher retention and graduation rates, thus promoting their progress towards a degree.

**6. BULLET POINTS TO SUPPORT REQUEST/RECOMMENDATION:**

- The policy revision incorporates the ACT's new college and career readiness benchmark score into Board policy governing placement into college-level English courses for students who take the ACT with writing, including Nevada high school graduates who are taking the ACT with writing in 2018. Adopting the ACT's college and career readiness benchmark score in ELA provides Nevada high school students another option (in addition to meeting the ACT's English benchmark scores) for placing into a college-level English course.

**7. POTENTIAL ARGUMENTS AGAINST THE REQUEST/RECOMMENDATION:**

None have been presented.

**8. ALTERNATIVE(S) TO WHAT IS BEING REQUESTED/RECOMMENDED:**

None have been presented.

**9. RECOMMENDATION FROM THE CHANCELLOR'S OFFICE:**

The Chancellor's Office recommends support for the policy revision.

**10. COMPLIANCE WITH BOARD POLICY:**

Consistent With Current Board Policy: Title #\_\_\_\_ Chapter #\_\_\_\_ Section #\_\_\_\_  
 Amends Current Board Policy: Title 4, Chapter 16, Section 1  
 Amends Current Procedures & Guidelines Manual: Chapter #\_\_\_\_ Section #\_\_\_\_  
 Other:\_\_\_\_\_  
 Fiscal Impact: Yes\_\_\_\_ No\_\_\_\_  
Explain:\_\_\_\_\_

**POLICY PROPOSAL**  
**TITLE 4, CHAPTER 16, SECTION 1**  
**NSHE Placement Policy - ACT ELA Benchmark Scores**

Additions appear in *boldface italics*; deletions are [~~stricken~~ and bracketed]

**Section 1. NSHE Placement Policy**

The placement policies of the Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE) are intended to ensure a foundation of knowledge and competencies that will assist students in successfully pursuing and attaining an academic degree. Students are strongly encouraged to prepare for the rigors of higher education prior to entering the NSHE.

....

2. Initial Placement of Students into English and Mathematics Courses.

- a. Exemption from Remedial Instruction. Degree-seeking students who meet or exceed the minimum English or mathematics scores on any one of the college readiness assessments listed below must be placed into a college-level course in that subject and are exempt from being placed into any form of remedial instruction in that subject provided that the student:
  - i. Was continuously enrolled in an English course and a mathematics course in his or her senior year of high school unless an exception is approved by an NSHE institution; and
  - ii. Enrolls in an NSHE institution after high school in any term (summer/fall/ winter/spring) during the academic year following high school graduation.

Institutions may use other factors including high school transcript, grade point average, or additional testing to determine the appropriate first college-level course. Institutions are not required to honor initial placement decisions pursuant to this subsection for students who fail to remain continuously enrolled in required mathematics and English courses until the core mathematics and English requirements are completed.

<u>College Readiness Assessments – English</u>	
<u>Test Score</u>	<u>Minimum Score</u>
ACT English <i>or</i> <i>ACT English Language Arts (ELA)</i>	18 ( <i>English</i> ) <i>or</i> 20 ( <i>ELA</i> )
SAT Critical Reading – SAT Test Date Prior to March 2016	500
SAT Evidence-Based Reading and Writing – SAT Test Date March 2016 and later	480
Smarter Balanced	2583 (Achievement Level 3)
PARCC	Level 4 Score

<u>College Readiness Assessments - Mathematics</u>	
<u>Test Score</u>	<u>Minimum Score</u>
ACT Mathematics	22
SAT Math – SAT Test Date Prior to March 2016	500
SAT Math – SAT Test Date March 2016 and later	530
Smarter Balanced	2628 (Achievement Level 3)
PARCC	Level 4 Score