**RSAI Position Paper Standards, Assessment and Technology**

**A 2016 Legislative Priority**

**Background:** HF 215 from the 2013 Legislative Session required, beginning July 1, 2016, rules must provide that all students in grades 3-11 take an assessment in the last quarter of the school year that at a minimum assesses specified indicators, is aligned with the Iowa Common Core Standards in both content and rigor, accurately describes student achievement and growth for purposes of school, district and state accountability systems, and provides valid, reliable, and fair measures of student progress toward college or career readiness.

* An Assessment Task Force, required in the legislation, convened and studied assessments with the goal of answering the question, “What’s best for Iowa students?” The task force, on a vote of 20:1, recommended Smarter Balanced Assessments, including formative assessments. Their report is available here: <https://www.educateiowa.gov/documents/boards-committees-councils-and-taskforces/2015/01/2014-12-31-iowa-assessment-task-force>
* The State BOE began the rule making process, Sept. 17, 2015, signaling their clear intention to select the Smarter Balanced Assessments as Iowa’s state accountability assessments to be initially administered in May 2017.  This begins the 108-day period of public comment.
* The issue of funding for assessments, estimate by the DE to be $28.25 per student, or about $8 million statewide, will be considered by the 2016 Legislative appropriations process. That figure represents the SBAC summative or end-of-year assessment, interim/formative assessments, and a digital library. The Task Force reconvened in late September to begin the process to recommend a statewide assessment for science, not included in SBAC.
* Learn more about the Iowa Core on the Iowa Department of Education website here: <https://iowacore.gov/>

**Current Reality:**

* RSAI supports the Task Force Recommendation of SBAC, which is an assessment aligned to the Iowa Core Standards. This content is challenging and rigorous, so our educators will continue to need ongoing training and support.
* Such an assessment is best delivered electronically, especially if districts expect a computer adaptive test that alters the subsequent question based on the student’s prior answer, thus narrowing in quickly on what students know and can do.
* Computer administered assessments depend on adequate training for staff and both the bandwidth and technological capacity to set students (and districts) up for success.
* Pending sunset of the state penny limits this source of funding as a permanent support for ongoing technology expenditures.

**Standards, Assessment and Technology:** RSAI supports the Iowa Core Content Standards, including an aligned assessment and supports for the technology and bandwidth required to adequately administer the assessment.