California Department of Education

Executive Office

SBE-002 (REV. 11/2017)

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# **MEMORANDUM**

**DATE:** August 16, 2019

**TO:** MEMBERS, State Board of Education

**FROM:** TONY THURMOND, State Superintendent of Public Instruction

**SUBJECT:** Considerations for Including the State Seal of Civic Engagement in the College/Career Indicator

## Summary of Key Issues

California *Education Code* sections 51470–51474 direct the State Superintendent of Public Instruction (SSPI) to develop, and the State Board of Education (SBE) to adopt, a set of criteria for awarding the State Seal of Civic Engagement (SSCE). The SSCE will be awarded to students who have demonstrated excellence in civics education and participation and an understanding of the United States Constitution and the democratic system of government. The statute requires the SSPI to recommend the criteria to the SBE by January 1, 2020, and that the SBE take final action on the criteria by
January 31, 2021.

Statute requires the SSPI to consult with a diverse group of credentialed, current, classroom teachers who teach the subject of history–social science (HSS), including government, in secondary schools. The statute also directs the SSPI to provide all students with an opportunity to earn the SSCE to the greatest extent feasible. Further, the SSCE should recognize pupil excellence or achievement, confer some benefit beyond secondary school, and not be based on achievement that is already recognized in another form. More information regarding the SSCE and how the recommended criteria were developed is available on the California Department of Education (CDE) SSCE web page at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/pd/ca/hs/hssstateseal.asp>.

The draft SSCE recommended criteria were presented to the SBE for initial review and feedback on July 10, 2019. Members discussed the importance of ensuring that the SSCE is accessible to all students, including students with disabilities, and recommended modifying the criteria language to emphasize continuous civic engagement and an interdisciplinary approach. Members also engaged in a conversation about whether and how the SSCE might be used for accountability purposes but no specific action was taken.

To inform further deliberation regarding inclusion of the SSCE in the accountability system, staff from the Educator Excellence and Equity Division and Analysis, Measurement, and Accountability Reporting Division met to determine how the SSCE could be included as a measure in the College/Career Indicator (CCI). The draft recommended criteria and guidance presented in July would need to be revised significantly to provide the standardization necessary to include the SSCE as a measure in a state indicator. This standardization is required to ensure that the measure be valid, reliable, and fair to all schools. However, it would reduce the number of students who would have the opportunity to earn the SSCE, which is in direct conflict with the intent of the legislation.

If directed by the SBE to investigate the incorporation of the SSCE into the CCI, CDE staff would convene a work group with expertise in the subject of HSS, including government to explore possible criteria for a CCI-eligible SSCE including:

1. Earn a high school diploma. The following documents would meet this requirement:
* Standard diploma (which includes the California High School Proficiency Examination)
* High School Equivalency certificate (e.g., General Educational Development Test)
* Adult education diploma
* Certificate of Completion plus eligibility for the California Alternate Assessment if under the age of twenty;
1. Earn a C- or better in United States History and American Government courses;
2. Participate in an informed civic engagement project to address real world problems;
3. Exhibit character traits that support civic-mindedness, supported by a reference from someone that can attest to and substantiate the student’s civic engagement.

For any measure to be included in the California School Dashboard (Dashboard), data must be available at the student level. Criteria one and two (diploma and grade in government) are currently available in California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System (CALPADS). However, criteria three and four require extensive developmental work to clearly define civic engagement projects and character traits that support civic-mindedness. Once definitions are developed these data elements would need to be incorporated into the CALPADS end-of-year data collection process. If the Work Group completed the criteria definitions by March 1, 2020, it may be possible to collect the data in the summer of 2021 for possible inclusion in the 2022 Dashboard. Even if this ambitious timeline is met, it is well beyond the legislative timeline for the SBE to adopt criteria by Jan 31, 2020.

The CDE recommends that the SBE proceed with the discussion to adopt the revised proposed criteria that will be brought to the September 2019 SBE meeting. In addition, to ensure that as many students as possible have the opportunity to earn the SSCE, the CDE would like to recommend that the SBE consider exploring the development of an “Advanced” SSCE that could be standardized for incorporation into the CCI for future Dashboards.

## Attachment(s)

None.