



August 14, 2015

Superintendent Hofmeister,

The Oklahoma State School Boards Association enthusiastically offers its support for your plan to offer the ACT at no cost to every high school junior.

Offering the ACT free to every junior means opening the door of opportunity to as many as 10,000 more students who wouldn't otherwise take the test because they either can't afford it or don't view themselves as "college material." ACT is a rite of passage for the vast majority of students in our state as they consider their futures.

A significant number of Oklahoma students have parents who didn't attend college, and those students are less likely to pursue higher education. Almost 20 percent of Oklahoma students who take the ACT are potential first-generation college students. Reaching more of these potential college students could increase the college-going rate, which is critical to Oklahoma's goal of producing more college graduates.

This effort also sends a message of confidence to our students that state leaders believe they are capable of high achievement, even if they choose not to pursue higher education. Students who opt to take the test will better understand their readiness for college and the workforce. Research has demonstrated the knowledge and skills needed to enter college mirror those employers expect of high school graduates who plan to directly enter the workforce. That's valuable information for students and families.

Oklahoma's schools welcome sensible accountability. An expanded ACT offering will provide schools with more accurate student achievement data and enable more precise comparisons of student performance across states, particularly compared to states with statewide ACT initiatives.

OSSBA appreciates your leadership on this important issue.

Sincerely,

Shawn Hime,
Executive Director

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