



OCT 12 2019

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

To the Members of the California Assembly:

I am returning Assembly Bill 751 without my signature.

This bill would establish the Pathways to College Act and require the Superintendent of Public Instruction to approve nationally recognized high school assessments that a local education agency may administer in place of the state-sponsored high school summative assessment, Smarter Balanced, beginning with the 2020-21 school year.

Encouraging student access to college and reducing the student testing burden in high school are laudable goals. However, I am concerned that replacing the state's high school assessment with the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) or American College Test (ACT) will have the opposite effect. Specifically, their use exacerbates the inequities for underrepresented students, given that performance on these tests is highly correlated with race and parental income, and is not the best predictor for college success.

It is important to remember that over the last several years California has made great strides towards establishing a coherent accountability system. Measuring how students throughout the state perform on our state's assessments, including the grade 11 assessment, provides critical information to students, families, educators, and our state

Finally, our K-12 system and public universities continue to discuss the potential for using of California's grade 11 state assessment for college admissions or eligibility purposes in the future. This would be a better approach to improving access to college for underrepresented students and reducing 'testing fatigue.'

Sincerely,

Gavin Newsom