

State tests and family rights

State Law requires that each Oregon school district notify families of their right to exempt (opt out) their child from the summative English language arts and/or math tests given this spring, including the Smarter Balanced and Extended Assessments. The state has created a form available at your school which families can use to opt their child out of the testing. For many years, the state has allowed families to refuse testing for their students based only on reasons of religion or disability. In the past session the legislature passed a law that parents could opt their children out of the summative English language arts and/or math tests, including the Smarter Balanced and Extended Assessments, without stating a reason.

Parents/guardians who wish to opt out their child from state tests must inform their school office. The state form to opt out can be obtained at your school office. If a family wishes to submit a letter or other documentation with a signature, the ODE form will be attached to the letter or other documentation to ensure the necessary information is included to properly identify the student who will not be testing. A student who is 18 years of age or over may opt himself or herself out of the test. Families can fill out the form to opt out their student at any time, but are encouraged to submit as soon as possible to allow schools to plan prior to the beginning of testing.

The purpose of the assessments is to allow school districts to evaluate how well students are learning the Common Core State Standards. The learning targets which make up the Common Core Standards can be found here: <http://www.ode.state.or.us/search/results/?id=53> Achievement level descriptors for the Smarter Balanced Assessments can be found here: <http://www.smarterbalanced.org/assessments/scores/>. Results of the Smarter Balanced Assessments administered this spring are anticipated to be publicly available in September and can be found here: <http://www.oregon.gov/ode/educator-resources/assessment/Pages/Assessment-Results.aspx>

The Smarter Balanced Test may be administered beginning March 12, 2018 in SFSD schools, but each school determines when testing will be done in their building. For specific testing dates for your child, please contact the school. The Smarter Balanced Assessments are untimed tests, and the approximate class time a student is anticipated to spend testing is eight hours. Some students may spend less or more time, depending on their individual progress through the assessment.

The new law only applies to summative English language arts and/or math tests, including the Smarter Balanced and Extended Assessments. If families wish to exempt their child from the science assessment, it must be based on reasons of religion or disability. The form for these tests may also be obtained from the school office. The form must be signed and returned to the school office.