

# State and District Student Participation in Required Assessments Plan

## Information from OSPI (state)

### From OSPI's [Washington State Test Coordinator's Manual, Spring 2018](#):

*Federal and state laws require public schools to administer assessments to students enrolled in the specified grades and subjects, the assumption being that participation on the part of the student or approval on the part of the parent would not be an issue. Because it is not specifically addressed in the legislation, adopted agency policy has been that students may refuse to participate or parents may refuse to have their children participate. The policy further requires the school to request that the refusal on the part of either the student or parent be put into writing by the parent and be kept on file at the school or district office.*

*This refusal will not avoid any consequences for not testing, such as failure to graduate.*

## Pullman School District Board Policy 2410

### 4.0 Pass Necessary Washington State Assessments

As a school district within the state of Washington, Pullman School District is required to follow state guidelines regarding graduation requirements. This includes requirements in state testing and/or state approved alternatives necessary to graduate. PSD will follow state guidelines as outlined by the Washington State Board of Education that specify if specific assessments or alternatives are required to be met by students prior to issuing a diploma.

## District Practice

### Student/Parent Rights of Refusal

The intent of state and district policy is that all students participate in state-mandated assessments. Parents have the legal right to refuse to have their child take a state assessment but must accept the consequences of the action. In cases where a student refuses to take the assessment, the parent should be contacted. It is the responsibility of school and/or school district personnel to:

- make sure parents and students understand all ramifications of this decision, including the fact that refusing to participate in testing in no way releases the student from the consequences resulting from that action (such as failure to graduate); and
- document the refusal and the reason for the refusal.

## District Process

### Benefits for Students Taking State Assessments (SBA/WCAS/EOC/WaKIDS/ELPA21) and District (MAP/DIBELS) Assessments

- ✓ The state and district assessments assess critical state standards, including higher-level thinking, communication, reasoning, problem solving, and application of knowledge and skills in new situations. Teachers and staff can gain information about students' progress toward meeting grade-level expectations (what students should know and be able to do) in the core academic areas of reading, writing, math, and science, and can plan instruction accordingly.
- ✓ By taking the Smarter Balanced Assessment (SBA) in grades 3-8 and the Washington Comprehensive Assessment of Science (WCAS) in grades 5 and 8, students become familiar

with the test and have several chances to get feedback on their performance, before taking the state assessment as a graduation requirement.

- ✓ High school students who earn level 3 or 4 scores on the Smarter Balanced Assessment (SBA) may avoid further placement testing and costly remedial courses upon acceptance into college, university or community and technical college. Read more at this benefit online at: [www.k12.wa.us/resources/pubdocs/SmarterBalanced-HigherEd.pdf](http://www.k12.wa.us/resources/pubdocs/SmarterBalanced-HigherEd.pdf)
- ✓ Each student's state and district assessment performance provides a profile of the student's strengths and weak areas in each subject area tested.
- ✓ Parents and students can see student growth from year to year on state assessments and throughout the year on district assessments.
- ✓ Through a request to the state, parents can view their child's answers on his or her completed state assessment to gain a deeper understanding of how their child is progressing on state standards.
- ✓ Because the state and district assessment measures students' progress toward meeting standards, information regarding the performance of district groups of students can help district staff make decisions about the effectiveness of various instructional programs.

#### **Benefits for Students Taking the WA-AIM (for students with significant cognitive disabilities)**

- ✓ The student's growth on key tasks is documented two times a year, showing the student's progress toward state standards.
- ✓ The evidence submitted ensures that students with the most intensive disabilities have an opportunity to "show what they know" and to receive instruction at a level that is challenging and attainable.

#### **Consequences When Students Do Not Take the State and District Assessments**

- ✓ Students who do not pass the High School state assessment in the required subjects, or an approved alternative, will not obtain a high school diploma.
- ✓ Students who do not attempt the High School state assessment at least once in a content area are not eligible to access alternative options in that content area (except for certain transfer students, according to state rules).
- ✓ Teachers and staff lack full information about the instructional needs of students who do not take the state and district assessments, which could lead to some students not receiving all the instructional support or acceleration they might need to be successful later in school.
- ✓ Students who do not take the SBA or WCAS prior to high school will not have had the opportunity to practice and get feedback before taking the High School state assessments as a graduation requirement.
- ✓ Students who do not participate in state assessments are counted among the number of students who do not meet standard. This penalizes schools and districts, creating inaccurate proficiency measures and may cause them to be ineligible for state or federal awards or recognition when participation falls below 95 percent.

#### **If you have read the information above and still wish to refuse that your child participates in required assessments ...**

Contact your child's principal to set up a meeting. At this meeting, the principal will:

- Ask you to share your reasons for refusal
- Provide additional information about the assessment process to address your concerns

- Ensure that you have read and understand the benefits for students taking state assessments and the consequences for students not taking state assessments (see information above)
- Provide you with a State/District Assessment Refusal Documentation Form if you still wish to refuse testing