

Testing opt-out/refusal guide for Hawaii

Form completed by Peggy Robertson

Contact information (email) writepeg@juno.com

List of Assessments

Pulled directly from the Hawaii Dept. of Ed. website where they are listed as assessments/projects

(<http://sas.sao.k12.hi.us/STATE/SAO/SASWebsite.nsf/10d1a575953d0e908a256c340001adab/a8f1c302a5a21b660a2575ac006814aa?OpenDocument>)

ACT College and Career Readiness System

The Hawaii Department of Education will administer the ACT College and Career Readiness System on a statewide basis for School Year 2012-13 that consists of the following assessments:

1. EXPLORE for all grade 8 and 9 students;
2. PLAN for all grade 10 students; and
3. ACT Plus Writing for all grade 11 students.

The ACT College and Career Readiness System will provide all secondary schools with a longitudinal metric aligned to the Common Core State Standards and College Readiness Standards to monitor and measure student progress toward and readiness for post-secondary plans.

Assessment Results Workbooks

Each year the Student Assessment Section produces a series of Hawaii State Assessment Program (HSAP) results workbooks. These workbooks contain a statewide summary of assessment results and school-specific results at the individual student level.

End-of Course (EOC) Exams

End-of-Course Exams will be administered to all students in an Algebra I, Algebra II, Biology I, Expository Writing I and/or U.S. History course at the end of the spring 2013 semester/year. The Biology I EOC Exam will be administered to all students in a block-scheduled course at the end of the fall 2012 semester as well as at the end of the spring 2013 semester/year. The American Diploma Project (ADP) Algebra II End-of-Course Exam will no longer be administered. A new Algebra II EOC Exam will be administered beginning in spring 2013.

Hawaiian Language HSA

Hawaiian Language Immersion Program (HLIP) students in grades 3 and 4 are administered the Hawaiian Language HSAs in reading and mathematics using the online HSA system. Students in grade 4 are also administered the online Hawaiian Language HSA in science.

HSA - Hawaii State Assessment

The online HSA in reading and mathematics is administered to students in grades 3 - 8 and 10. This assessment includes multiple choice and machine-scored constructed response questions. Students in grades 4, 8 and 10 also take the online HSA in science. Information about the HSA for parents, students and educators may be found at the AlohaHSA.org website.

HSA-Alt - Hawaii State Assessment - Alternate

The Hawaii State Alternate Assessment (HSAA) is administered to IDEA students who qualify under the participation criteria for the Alternate Assessment. The HSAA in reading and mathematics is administered to students in grades 3 - 8 and 10 and the HSAA in science is administered to students in grades 4, 8, and 10. The HSAA's for reading, mathematics and science are administered throughout the school year. Information about the HSAA for parents and educators may be found at the AlohaHSAA.org website.

NAEP in Hawaii

The NAEP is a national assessment administered biennially to a randomly selected group of students in grades 4, 8 and 12. The National NAEP website provides an overview of NAEP in Hawaii, reports for reading, mathematics, science, and writing, and item compilations in reading, mathematics, science, and geography.

Special considerations for the above assessments

Regarding EOCs :

(<http://sas.sao.k12.hi.us/STATE/SAO/SASWebsite.nsf/By+Category/4A5D1052A16750A70A25763400079E95?OpenDocument>)

End-of-Course exams are statewide summative assessments administered at the end of a course. The Hawaii Department of Education requires students in the following courses to be administered EOC exams as part of the Race to the Top grant requirements: Algebra I, Algebra II, Biology I, Expository Writing I, and U.S. History.

Students in Biology I are required to take the Biology I EOC Exam as part of the requirements for the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) law. The statewide participation rate is reported as required by NCLB. Student performance and participation rates on the Biology I EOC Exam have no bearing on a school's AYP calculation. The Grade 10 HSA in Science is no longer administered.

Also read:

The End-of-Course Exams serve three main purposes:

1. To improve curriculum and instruction and ensure consistency throughout the state. The exams help classroom teachers focus on the most important concepts and skills and identify areas where the curriculum needs to be strengthened.

2. To help higher education determine if students are ready to do credit-bearing work. Because the exams are aligned with the Common Core State Standards and/or the Hawaii Content and Performance Standards, III, they will measure skills students need to enter and succeed in first-year, credit-bearing courses. Post-secondary institutions will be able to use the results of the exams to tell high school students whether they are ready for college-level work, or if they have content and skill gaps that need to be filled before they enroll in college. This information should help high schools better prepare their students for college, and reduce the need for colleges to provide costly remediation courses.
3. To assess progress throughout the state. Reports will be issued that will help state education leaders, educators and the public assess progress, identify areas for improvement and evaluate the impact of state strategies for improving overall achievement.

Procedures for opt-out/refusal

No loopholes were discovered however we also did not find any serious consequences, with the exception of the 95% participation rate. Oddly enough the wording on the parent letters states that they “strongly encourage” parents to have their children participate. We find this wording to imply that they recognize they cannot force a child to take a test.

FAQ here: <http://www.alohahsap.org/HSA/FAQ.html>

Parent letters were found here: <http://www.alohahsap.org/HSA/resourcesGeneral.html>

Here is a sample of one:

PARTICIPATION LETTER FOR GENERAL EDUCATION STUDENTS REGARDING THE ONLINE HAWAI‘I STATE READING, MATHEMATICS, AND SCIENCE ASSESSMENTS AND THE BIOLOGY I END-OF-COURSE EXAM

Dear Parent,

During the 2012 – 2013 school year, all students in grades 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 10 will take the Online Hawai‘i State Reading and Mathematics Assessments. Students in grades 4 and 8 will take the Online Hawai‘i State Science Assessment. Students in grades 9 – 12 who are enrolled in Biology I will take the Biology I End-of-Course Exam. Your child will take the assessments on different days during the school year. We will inform you of the specific dates before your child takes each assessment. The purpose of the assessments is to provide you and your child’s teacher(s) with information about the extent to which your child has met selected Hawai‘i content standards in reading, mathematics, and science, depending on your child’s current grade level. We have attached a *Parent Information Booklet* with information about the assessments and what you can do to help your child prepare.

The United States Department of Education (USDE) requires that all states receiving Title I funding comply with the requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2001, including the participation of all students in yearly academic assessments (Section 1111 (3) (C) (i)). According to the requirements of NCLB, all states must “develop challenging academic standards that are the same for every student” and “ensure that all schools test at least 95 percent of all students.”

The Department of Education strongly encourages all parents to have their children participate in the Online Hawai‘i State Assessments so that we can better identify their academic strengths and needs.

If you have any questions, please contact the school at _____.

Sincerely,

Principal

Urgency for opt-out/refusal

High Stakes Testing:

Is not scientifically-based and fails to follow the U.S. Government's own data on learning.

- Fosters test driven education that is not meeting the individual/intellectual needs of students.
- Presents a racial and economic bias that is beneficial to white middle/upper class students and detrimental to second language students, impoverished students, and students of color.
- Is in opposition to the corrective action in gaps in opportunity and resources sanctioned by the Fiscal Fairness Act.
- Supports complicity of corporate interests rather than democracy based on public concerns.
- Fosters coercion over cooperation with regards to federal funding for public education.
- Promotes a culture of lying, cheating, and exploitation within the school community.
- Has used the achievement gap to foster a “de facto” segregation that has resulted in separate and unequal education for minorities.

Additionally, data collection of student's private information cannot be guaranteed security or that it will not be abused in some way by third party entities.

Low/poor test scores, which are likely to occur with more frequency with Common Core and PARCC and SBA will be used to fire teachers, create more online learning scenarios even in elementary schools, and close more public schools to be replaced with for profit charter schools.

Sample language to include in opt-out/refusal

This is what we received from the DOE several years ago when we contacted them:

Contact child's school – there is a process/guidelines to follow. Parent/guardian will need to write a letter asking that the child not be administered the state test. Letter is needed to provide evidence to USDOE

Potential contact: Kent Hinton, Student Assessment Section, Systems Accountability Office, (808) 733-4100 ext 222 – desk, 641 18th Avenue #V102, (808) 733-4483 – fax, Honolulu, Hawaii 96816

Sample opt out letter

Dear _____:

I am writing on behalf of _____ to opt him/her out of the (test name). He/she is neither permitted to take the exam during mandated testing days nor during designated make-up sessions. Additionally, I am requesting that the school make accommodations for meaningful alternative activities or assignments that will continue to promote his/her academic and intellectual growth. My child will not be in attendance if academically viable alternatives are not available. Furthermore, I must be guaranteed in writing that whatever option is taken, either alternative assignments or absence, my child will not face any negative consequences to, for example, course grades, social or behavioral evaluations, workload, promotion, or future classroom assignments.

Strict adherence to state and federal high-stakes standardized testing, including the extensive classroom preparation that occurs prior to test administration, prevents my child from receiving a well-rounded and engaging educational experience. Until focus on testable skills diminishes to a reasonable extent, I will continue to withhold my child from participation in the testing program, and I ask that you honor that decision.

I do apologize in advance for the inconvenience or scrutiny that this decision may cause the administration, the school, and staff.

Sincerely,

Resources and organizations

<https://www.facebook.com/CampbellWorkTheRulesProtest?fref=ts>

<http://unitedoptout.com/united-opt-out-national-toolkit-opt-out-of-high-stakes-testing/>

<http://unitedoptout.com/parental-rights/>

State specific watch-list

<http://www.studentsfirst.org/page/group/HawaiiforEducationReform>

http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php/Hawaii_ALEC_Politicians

<http://www.teachforamerica.org/where-we-work/hawaii>

Additional or miscellaneous information

Yes, see here: <http://hawaiidoe.org/strivehisystem/index.htm>

Additional Considerations:

We suggest demanding that National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) be used for those who feel a need to administer a standardized test. Read here to find out more: http://www.sdkrashen.com/articles/NUT_No_Unnecessary_Testing.pdf

Additionally, if your school is participating in any field tests, these can easily be refused. Field tests are created to determine which questions to use on future tests, and, in essence, place students in a position of working for the corporations who develop these tests. We suggest refusing them.

If your child brings home homework in the form of test prep booklets, consider refusing these as well. Ask your child's teachers to provide alternative activities or creative projects in place of test preparation.