

## Testing opt-out/refusal guide for: [Idaho](#)

The following is a quick-reference guide for information on opting out or refusing tests in a specific state. We thank our supporters for assisting us in collecting these necessary details to encourage test refusals nationwide. If the reader feels that the information on this form is incomplete or inaccurate, please email [unitedoptoutnational@gmail.com](mailto:unitedoptoutnational@gmail.com) with additional details or corrections. Feel free to download and use this form as you see fit.

Form completed by [UOO Admin \(LM\)](#)

Contact information (email) [unitedoptoutnational@gmail.com](mailto:unitedoptoutnational@gmail.com)

### LIST OF ASSESSMENTS

Please include, in addition to the main state test, all interim assessments, benchmarks, field tests, and other inventories (for example, DIBELS, MAP, or the Fountas and Pinnell BAS).

#### **High Stakes Test:** Idaho State Achievement Tests (ISAT)

Students in 3rd through 8th grade as well as 10th grade take a standards-based test called the **Idaho Standards Achievement Test (ISAT)**.

The ISAT tests reading, language usage and math in grades 3-8 and grade 10. Science tests are given to Students in 5th, 7th and 10th grades

Additional Idaho Standardized Tests:

Idaho Reading Indicator (IRI): K-3 grades

Direct Writing Assessment (DWA): 5th, 7th and 9th grades.

Direct Mathematics Assessment (DMA): 4th, 6th and 8th grades

### SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE ABOVE ASSESSMENTS

Detail here important rules or regulations about assessments. For instance, specific graduation and promotion requirements, entrance requirements for special programs, and/or proportions of final grades. These should be understood before an opt-out or refusal is considered.

Idaho requires ISAT testing as part of its graduation requirements. However, United Opt Out contacted the Idaho Department of Education to determine their official response. This is their emailed reply:

*Because ISAT testing is used as a graduation requirement and as a measure of a student's progress, we desire that all students take the ISAT. However, if a parent chooses to not allow their student to test, they need to contact their district/school and ask for the proper protocol, because each district handles it differently. Typically, a letter is requested from the parent explaining that they are refusing to allow their child to test.*

*As a note, this will be held against the school and could possibly cause the school to not make Annual Yearly Progress in student participation **and will not answer the graduation requirement. [emphasis added]***

Official Graduation Requirements:

[http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/hs\\_grad\\_requirements/docs/Grad%20minimum%20Requirements.pdf](http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/hs_grad_requirements/docs/Grad%20minimum%20Requirements.pdf)

Graduations Requirements:

A student must meet all of the following criteria:

1. 46 total credits, including...
2. Students must successfully complete a senior project...
3. Pass the Idaho State Achievement Tests (ISAT). All students are required to be proficient in these tests in order to graduate.

In addition to the above, the class of 2013 must take either the SAT, ACT or Compass exam by the end of grade 11.

### **PROCEDURES FOR OPT-OUT/REFUSAL**

This section includes information on specific laws, statutes, and procedures, including loopholes, exceptions, alternatives, and potential consequences.

Idaho expects all children to be tested, but is vague as to the consequences for not completing all tests. In an email received from the Idaho Department of Education, United Opt Out was informed that the parent needed to submit a request to the specific school district. However, it sidestepped the specific graduation requirement. Therefore, parents who choose to opt out should insist that multiple forms of assessment, such as a portfolio review, be used in place of the test requirements.

### **URGENCY FOR OPT-OUT/REFUSAL**

This section includes current issues and policies specific to this state, namely school budget issues, influence of outside groups, elections, and other issues affecting children. Please explain why opting out of high-stakes testing is important to saving public education in this state.

HST:

- 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.

As Common Core is implemented, the number of tests and test-centric activities will increase dramatically. Low/poor test scores, which are likely to occur with more frequency with Common Core, will be used to fire teachers, replace human interaction with the internet /technology driven activities (even in elementary schools), and close community public schools and replace them with for-profit charter schools.

### **Sample language to include in opt-out/refusal**

This section includes sample phrases or language relevant to specific procedures in this state and/or a complete sample opt-out/refusal 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, future classroom assignments, and/or promotion or graduation.

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,

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## **RESOURCES AND ORGANIZATIONS**

This section lists resources and organizations helpful in this state in the form of names, links, email contact information, or otherwise. This is an opportunity to build a grassroots base in this state.

Local organized opposition to education reform efforts appears to be very limited.

## **STATE SPECIFIC WATCH-LIST**

This final section contains a list of names, organizations, or other entities to track or otherwise know by name when scanning local media. These are individuals and organizations that potentially undermine public education in this state and can include entities from outside the state that are influencing local affairs.

J.A. and Kathryn Albertson Foundation: host monthly ED Sessions luncheons/speaker sessions. Recent meeting featured Andy Smarick, former deputy assistant secretary at the U.S. Department of Education and partner at the national nonprofit Bellwether Education Partners. Note: Bellwether Education Partners provides assistance to organizations seeking to advance education reform by providing leadership development, strategic planning, and executive talent searches.

## **ADDITIONAL OR MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION**

Anything else we should know about education reform in your state?

Idaho is a conservative state with most organized resistance focused on Common Core and coming from those who object to federal intervention in local education.

However, in November of 2012, voters did overturn several key education reform initiatives concerning merit pay and teacher evaluations that had been passed by their legislators in 2011. Most financial support for the effort came from national groups, and locally organized opposition to education reform efforts appears to be very limited.

UNITED OPT OUT: Do Not Edit