

Testing opt-out/Refusal guide for Nevada

Form completed by UOO Admin (LM)

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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).

Criterion Referenced Tests (CRT)

Grades 3, 4, 6, and 7: Math and Reading

Grades 5 and 8: Math, Reading, and Science

2012-2013 Assessment Schedule:

CRT: Reading and Math; Grades 3-8. Begins on 150th day of instruction +/- 10 days

CRT: Science; Grades 5 and 6. Begins on 150th day of instruction +/- 10 days

High School Proficiency Examination (HSPE)

HSPE: Writing; Grades 11: Oct 31, March 6. Grade 12 and adult: Oct 31, March 6, May 1, July 10

ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT

Students in Nevada are required to take the Nevada High School Proficiency Examination (HSPE) in writing which is a performance based assessment designed to assess a student's ability to write. The HSPE in writing is a high stakes test for students since they must pass it in order to receive a standard high school diploma.

This alternative opportunity is for those students who have difficulty responding when taking the regular on-demand test administration. Students who are interested in this opportunity must meet the eligibility requirements in order to participate...

GENERAL GUIDELINES:

The student must submit four samples of his or her original writing. (See http://doe.nv.gov/Assessment_HSPE.htm manuals for details)

Students are allowed to take advantage of the Alternative Writing Assessment only ONCE during their regular graduation senior year. This opportunity is not available for students who might be seniors multiple times, i.e., fifth or sixth year high school students or adult education students.

In order for students to exercise the option to attempt the Alternative Writing Assessment, they must have failed HSPE writing assessment at least 2 times prior to their 12th grade school year, and they must meet the following additional eligibility criteria by the end of the first semester of their current senior year:

- Have passed the HSPE reading and math assessments;
- Have an un-weighted GPA of at least 2.75; and
- Have earned sufficient credits to be on schedule to graduate in their current graduating class of 2013.

HSPE: Reading, Math, and Science; Grade 10. March 4-8

Retest: Reading, Math, and Science; Grades 11: Oct 29-Nov.2, March 4-8.

Grade 12 and adult: Oct 29-Nov.2, March 4-8, April 29-May 1, July 8-12.

Nevada Alternate Assessment (NAA)

The NAA is the state assessment of alternate achievement standards. The assessment is administered to less than 1% of all students in Nevada who meet the strict criteria required in order to be assessed with the NAA. Beginning in 2009-10, the NAA assesses student academic performance on Nevada Content Standards through direct observation of specific tasks. Each task is an indication of a specific academic skill that has been linked to grade level content. These observations are recorded as digital video-clips that are scored by the classroom teacher. Later, during a validation score session, a second scorer will view the digital video-clips and validate that the score provided by the classroom teacher is accurate.

2012-2013 Schedule

NAA: Reading and Math; Grades 3-8, Grade 11; Feb 4- April 30

NAA: Science and Writing; Grades 5, 8, and 11. Feb. 4 - Apr. 30

Nevada Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), also referred to as the Nations Report Card, is a continuing and nationally representative student performance in several content areas including, but not limited to reading, mathematics, science, writing, and U.S. history.

NAEP is governed by the National Assessment Governing Board (NAGB) and is conducted by the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) which is part of the U.S. Department of Education. Results are confidential. The names of the students who participate in NAEP never leave the school. Thus, results are not reported in terms of individual students. In Nevada results are only reported for the state as a whole or as part of the national results.

2012-2013 Schedule

NAEP: Grades 4, 8, and 12. Jan. 24 - Mar. 4. Schools selected for participation in NAEP 2013 will be contacted with their scheduled assessment date in the administration window.

English Language Proficiency Assessment (ELPA)

As required by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, all students who are identified as "Limited English Proficient" must be assessed annually for English proficiency in the five domains of speaking, listening, reading, writing, and comprehension. This language assessment does not replace the State English Language Arts Tests (CRT or HSPE) required by state law. All LEP students must participate in the state assessments as well as the assessment of English Language proficiency. Nevada has joined the WIDA Consortium to provide our English Language Proficiency Examination.

2012-2013 Schedule: ELPA: Speaking, Listening, Reading, and Writing; K - 12 Limited English Proficient Students. Mar. 4 - May 17

CTE: Employability Skills for Career Readiness Assessment; 10 - 12 CTE Completers: Apr. 1 - 26

CTE: End-of-Program Technical Assessments; 10 - 12 CTE Completers: Apr. 29 - May 17

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.

High School Proficiency Examination (HSPE)

If a student has all the credits necessary to graduate but has not passed the HSPE, can a student still get a diploma?

There is conflicting info on this answer

Here is one answer:

Yes. Students that still need to pass one or more content areas of the HSPE can enroll in an Adult Education program and, after appropriate remediation, continue to take the exam during regular testing windows.

http://doe.nv.gov/NAA/NPEP_FAQ_Version1_1_Fall2010.pdf

The HSPE in **writing is a high stakes test for students** since they must pass it in order to receive a standard high school diploma.

http://doe.nv.gov/Assessment/HSPE/Alternative_HSPE_WritingAdmin_Manual.pdf

It does appear that the HSPE results are part of the Millennium Scholarship program

<https://nevadatreasurer.gov/documents/millennium/Doc-FactSheet.pdf>

Procedures for opt-out/refusal

No specific opt out or refusal provision can be found for general students. Nevada expects all children to be tested, but is vague as to the consequences for not completing all tests. Official exemptions appear to be very limited. However, you may first attempt to see if your child qualifies. If they do not, then you may have to test the limits of refusal for the various tests.

Urgency for opt-out/refusal

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

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

You may want to check out the following:

Nevada Education Coalition. They are a diverse group, but have referenced the problems of high stakes testing. <http://www.nved.org>

Facebook pages/groups:

STOP Nevada Standardized Testing- Opt Out. This is a relatively new group.

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/STOP-Nevada-Standardized-Testing-Opt-Out/134053956796087?id=134053956796087&sk=info>

Shut Down the Strip for Education. This group was formed to protest education cuts. (They held a successful rally on the Strip) Their facebook address is <https://www.facebook.com/groups/191512227537883/?fref=ts>

For official information concerning Nevada standards and assessments:

http://www.doe.nv.gov/NDE_Offices/APAC/Assessments/ and

http://www.doe.nv.gov/Standards_Assessments/

State specific watch list

The *Education Reform* Blue Ribbon Task Force <http://www.nevadaracetothetop.org/>

The Education Alliance

http://www.all4ed.org/about_the_crisis/schools/state_information/nevada

Additional or miscellaneous information

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

For additional information concerning the administration of Nevada Assessments:

http://www.doe.nv.gov/NDE_Offices/APAC/Testing_and_Assessments/Resource_Page/Procedures_Manual_SY_2012-2013/

The following link provides an interesting summary of 2013 Legislative changes:

http://www.doe.nv.gov/Boards_Commissions_Councils/State_Board_of_Education/Meetings_Agendas_Minutes/2013/May/Item_8_Legislative_Update/