



Florida Standards Assessments (FSA) Communication February 25, 2015

FLORIDA STANDARDS ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

FSA and STUDENT PLACEMENT

1. How can students and parents prepare for the FSA and EOC exams?

Students and parents can best prepare for the FSA and EOC exams by ensuring students are in class each and every day. Overall, students are working and studying very hard, asking questions in class and completing assignments. Parents are encouraged to stay involved in their child's education by working with teachers and reviewing relevant websites and resources. It is important for all of us, parents, teachers, and staff, to encourage students to try their best, but to remember not to over-emphasize the assessments and create stress, fear, or frustration.

2. On what specific days will the FSA and EOC exams be administered? Are the FSA and EOC exams on the computer or paper-based?

The testing window begins on March 2nd. Please see the 2014-15 District Assessment Calendar for the specific dates of the FSA and EOC exams, as well as the computer or paper-based assessment format. Go to www.scps.k12.fl.us/testing/Home.aspx; scroll to the "Important Information" box, select 2014-15 District Assessment Schedule.

The amount of time and the number of testing sessions for each test is available on the FSA Portal www.fsassessments.org. Click on "Educators", click on "Spring 2015 Testing Times". Please be advised that the Florida Department of Education (FLDOE) may make changes to this document.

3. How will SCPS use Florida Standards Assessments (FSA) data for student placement in academic support and intervention programs required by statute?

For 2015-16 placement in academic support and intervention programs, students will be placed in grades/courses based on a review of a variety of individual student data points. The data points include, but are not limited to, teacher-made or teacher-selected classroom assessments, student course grades, school-based instructional technology program results (such as iReady, Think Through Math, Reading Plus, etc.), a review of 2014 FCAT scores (if available), Discovery Education Progress Monitoring, and other relevant state-approved assessment results. Students who demonstrate a need for intervention or intensive programs based on multiple sources of data will be provided with additional support.

FSA results will be reviewed upon release and verification of data. However, for the 2015-16 school year, the district is not required to reschedule students who have not earned a passing score on the FSA into remedial courses.



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4. Is the Discovery Education (DE) test the sole or primary determining factor for assigning students to the next grade level or placing students in courses?

No. Discovery Education is one data point that will be considered. DE is the progress monitoring instrument used by SCPS to comply with the required state statute to progress monitor students.

5. Do the FSA's count toward students' grades?

The FSA tests do not count toward a student's grade in a subject. The only state required assessments that have an academic consequence related to a student's grade in that subject are the EOC exams that include Algebra I, Biology, Geometry, Civics, U.S. History, and Algebra II that count for 30% of the student's semester grades.

6. If a student does not take the third grade Florida Standards Assessment – English/Language Arts (FSA – ELA) 3rd grade FSA, can a student be promoted to fourth grade without that score?

Third-grade students must participate in the statewide standardized assessment program required by section 1008.22, F.S. and demonstrate proficiency in reading in order to be promoted to fourth grade. Students not achieving a Level 2 or higher on the statewide assessment may qualify for a good cause exemption.

7. What alternative assessment(s) may be administered to my third grade child who has scored a Level 1 on the FSA to determine if he/she qualifies for good cause exemption and promotion to fourth grade?

Students not achieving a Level 2 or higher on the statewide assessment may qualify for a good cause exemption. Seminole County Public Schools uses the Stanford Achievement Test, Tenth Edition (SAT 10) as the alternate assessment.

Rule 6A-1.094221(1)(A), F.A.C., authorizes the use of the following nationally norm-referenced test in the determination of a good cause exemption for promotion to fourth grade:

- Stanford Achievement Test, Tenth Edition (SAT 10) – scoring above the 45th percentile
- Iowa Test of Basic Skills – scoring above the 50th percentile
- Terranova, 3rd Ed. – scoring above the 50th percentile

Is a portfolio option available?

Section 1008.25(6)(b)4 F.S. provides that a student who demonstrates through a student portfolio that the student is performing at least at Level 2 on the statewide standardized assessment is eligible for a good cause exemption.



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- 8. What are the consequences for a 10th grade student who does not take the FSA-ELA test or the Algebra I EOC exam? If my student does not take the FSA-ELA test or Algebra I EOC exam and passes the SAT, ACT or PERT, do they still receive their diploma or will my student receive a certificate of completion?**

It is a graduation requirement for students to earn a passing score on the 10th grade FSA-ELA and Algebra I EOC exam. In order to utilize a concordant (passing) score the student must have attempted the 10th grade FSA-ELA or the Algebra I EOC.

A student who does not have a passing score on the 10th grade FSA-ELA test or the Algebra I EOC may utilize the following:

- A concordant score on the SAT or ACT to meet the 10th grade FSA-ELA requirement
- A concordant score on the PERT to meet the Algebra I requirement.

A grade 10 student who earns a passing score on the SAT, ACT or PERT will earn a regular diploma and not a certificate of completion.

- 9. If a student does not take the FSA is he/she prohibited from taking Advanced Placement (AP) courses, advanced courses or honors courses?**

No, there is no requirement to participate in FSA to take Advanced Placement (AP) courses, advanced courses or honors courses?

- 10. Will students who don't participate in the FSA be prohibited from taking field trips or participating in other school-wide activities?**

No, there is no requirement to participate in FSA to participate in any SCPS field trip or activity.

- 11. How will students be treated if they refuse the test?**

Seminole County Public Schools seeks to treat students, staff and families with the utmost respect and courtesy. There should not be any intent to embarrass or humiliate students under any circumstances.

Students will be offered the test, as required by statute. If a student refuses to take the test, the parents will be notified, unless there is documentation from the parents that the student is not permitted to take the test. If a student refuses to take the test, and sits quietly during the testing session, the student will be allowed to remain seated. If there is any disruption that compromises the testing environment, the student will be escorted to another classroom or supervised area, and directed to read relevant grade level material during the remainder of the testing session.

Students who refuse to test are not penalized. For example, students are not disciplined, students are not in jeopardy of losing their magnet school assignment, being excluded from advanced courses, etc.



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12. Are students who take the Florida Alternative Assessment (FAA) required to take the Standards-Based Assessments (SBA's)?

Students enrolled in standard courses are required to participate in SBA's. SBA's will be accommodated/modified in accordance with the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP).

FAA students may be excused from participation in the SBA's if the student's cognitive ability and participation in the course does not include the student participating in written tests. SBA's are classroom based assessments. Accommodations for ESE, 504 and ELL students that are applicable to a classroom based assessment apply to SBA's.

13. If an Exceptional Education Student (ESE) student or parent of an ESE student requests not to participate in testing, how is a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) provided?

Florida Statutes Section 1008.22(3) provides that participation in the assessment program is mandatory for ALL students attending public schools, except as otherwise provided by law. Pursuant to section 1008.212, F.S., the IEP team, which must include the parent, may submit to the district school superintendent a written request for an extraordinary exemption from the administration of the assessment.

TESTING RULES ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

14. What is the "pledge or oath" that students and teachers are required to sign prior to taking the FSA?

It is a FLDOE requirement to ask students to sign or acknowledge the "Testing Rules Acknowledgement" statement. If students do not sign the "Testing Rules Acknowledgement", they can still participate in the test. For computer based testing, if the student does not select the button to acknowledge understanding of the testing rules, the student is able to access the test questions without pause or interruption. In computer based testing, the only way the proctor would be aware of a student's refusal to acknowledge test rules, is if the student indicates this refusal to the proctor.

For paper based testing, if the student refuses to sign the "Testing Rules Acknowledgement", the student continues on and begins the test without pause or interruption. Proctors monitoring for the signatures will not interrupt testing for a missing signature.

In the script provided to test administrators, the proctor is directed to take note of the student's name and notify the school test coordinator if the student did not sign or acknowledge the "Testing Rules Acknowledgement". On Page 66 of the FSA-ELA Writing manual, school test coordinators are directed to let these students test, but document the student's refusal and retain this documentation at the school. This information is not submitted to the district or the state.



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“NR2” DESIGNATION AND STATUS

15. What does the “NR2” designation mean and who decides to designate a test “NR2”?

An “NR2” designation means that the student’s score is not reported because the student did not meet “attemptedness”. The FLDOE, not Seminole County Public Schools, determines if the student has met attemptedness and designates the test, “NR2”.

“Attemptedness” is defined as the actual number of questions a student must answer in each test session. The number of questions that must be answered to qualify as attemptedness is not defined in writing by the FLDOE. The number of questions attempted in order to receive an “NR2” is subject to change by the FLDOE. FLDOE does an analysis of test responses to determine attemptedness, with their goal being to award scores to as many students as possible.

For the last several years, the “NR2” was assigned to a student if the student answered between 1 and 5 test questions in each session. If the student answered 6 or more in each session, the test was scored. There is no guarantee or guidance that this same metric will be applied during the 2014-2015 FSA testing period.

16. What penalties exist for a student who receives an “NR2” score?

There are no specific state penalties for students who receive an “NR2” score. However, it is important to note the following for grade 3 students who have an “NR2” score, no score (“NT”-Not Tested), or a Level 1 score.

There is a requirement for grade 3 students to demonstrate 3rd grade standards mastery on the state reading assessment to be promoted to grade 4. Absent a score, the student is provided a make-up test opportunity. If the student scores Level 1 or no score is available, the district will use a portfolio with state-approved reading passages to document mastery of 3rd grade standards or a state-approved concordant nationally normed test. The Stanford Achievement Test, Tenth Edition (SAT 10), the Iowa Test of Basic Skills and the Terranova, 3rd Ed. are the current state-approved tests.

Please note the following for grade 10 students who have an “NR2” score, “NT” score or a below proficiency score on the Grade 10 FSA-ELA and the Algebra I EOC exams.

A grade 10 student who does not have a passing score on the FSA-ELA test or the Algebra I EOC exam must earn a passing score on the SAT, ACT, or PERT to graduate from high school.

17. What designation will a student receive if he/she logs into a computer test or breaks a booklet seal and does not answer any questions at all?

Students who do not answer any questions on an assessment will receive an **“NT” (not tested)** designation.



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18. What is the impact of “NT” and “NR2” on school grades and teachers?

Students who are awarded an “NT” negatively impact the percent tested requirement for school grades. These students remain in the denominator of the school grade calculation.

Students who are awarded an “NR2” do not impact the percent tested requirement for school grades. These students are removed from the denominator of the school grades calculation.

If several students in a teacher’s class receive “NT” or “NR2”, then the teacher’s Value Added Model (VAM) score would be based on only those students who receive a score. The FLDOE will calculate a teacher’s VAM score on as few as two (2) students, although they do not recommend using this score in the evaluation process.

19. Will the district penalize students who have an “NR2” score? For example, will the district place students with an “NR2” in intensive courses based on the “NR2” score alone? Will the district not allow students to participate in advanced courses, including advanced, honors, gifted, and Advanced Placement (AP)? Will the district not allow students to participate in extracurricular activities or go on field trips?

There are no district penalties for a student with an “NR2” score. Students will be placed in grades/courses based on a review of a variety of individual student data points. The data points include, but are not limited to, teacher-made or teacher-selected classroom assessments, student course grades, school-based instructional technology programs (such as iReady, Think Through Math, Reading Plus, etc.) a review of 2014 FCAT scores (if available), Discovery Education Progress Monitoring, and other relevant state-approved assessment results.

FSA results will be reviewed upon release and verification of data. However, the FLDOE has informed districts that for the 2015-16 school year, student placement is determined by district criteria. Upon receipt of FSA results, districts are not required to change students’ course assignments. For example, if a student is not placed in an intensive reading or math course, but scores a Level 1 on the FSA, school personnel will review all current, available, and relevant student data to determine if the student should remain in their assigned course or be rescheduled for an intensive course. If the student is performing at or above expectation in the standard, honors or advanced course, then the student will remain in that course.

Students are eligible to participate in advanced, honors, gifted, and AP courses, as well as extracurricular activities and field trips.

CONTACT FOR ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS

20. Who should I contact if I have additional questions related to the FSA?

The first point of contact is the school principal. School principals have been asked to contact their respective Executive Directors regarding additional questions to ensure responses are appropriately reviewed and vetted.