

WHY OPT OUT?

High-stakes standardized assessments:

- have become too important, forcing teachers to “teach to the test,” not to the students.
- create excessive stress for children and teachers, because of the high-stakes.
- are developmentally inappropriate/ inaccurate/meaningless for K-3.
- are unethically tied to teacher pay/bonuses/ employment, school grades/real estate values.
- are detrimental - constant progress monitoring and test-prep waste instructional time, sacrificing critical activities such as electives, experiential learning and recess.
- are inherently limited in scope, unable to assess creativity (art, music, dance, creative problem solving, etc) and emotional intelligence.

The latest policies using wide scale online testing and competency-based education (CBE) have led to an explosion of high-stakes standardized tests. Testing, test prep, and progress monitoring have grown to unsurpassed levels, creating a toxic, high stress learning environment.

**IF YOU'RE NOT OPTING OUT...
YOU'RE OPTING IN.**

WHAT IS THE OPT OUT FLORIDA NETWORK?

Since 2012, **The Opt Out Florida Network** (formerly Opt Out Orlando) has advocated for multiple measures of authentic assessments, that are used to inform instruction and which do not result in punitive consequences for students, teachers and schools.

We are a network of parents, grandparents, students, educators and community members who are fighting for Florida's public schools.

***2016-2017 Opt Out Guide:
bit.ly/OptOutGuide1617**

***Special Opt Out group for 3rd Grade:
bit.ly/00FL3rd**

***Find your local Opt Out group:
bit.ly/LocalOptOutGroups**

For the most current education news:
The Opt Out Florida Network



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#PublicEdREVOLUTION

OPT OUT of FSA? YES, YOU CAN

INFORMED CONSENT:

IT IS EACH PARENT'S DUTY TO INVESTIGATE AND TO WEIGH THE HARM BEING DONE TO THEIR CHILD'S EDUCATION BY HIGH STAKES TESTING, AND TO UNDERSTAND THAT IT IS THEIR CHOICE, WHETHER OR NOT, TO ALLOW THEIR CHILD TO TEST, BUT THAT DOING SO PROVIDES THE DATA WITH WHICH TO RANK, SORT AND LABEL THEIR CHILDREN AND TEACHERS, HARMING PUBLIC EDUCATION FOR ALL.

THE OPT OUT

FLORIDA NETWORK
for a #PublicEdRevolution

JUST THE FACTS

- FL law says that districts must administer the FSA. It says that all students must “participate”... When students sit for the test, break the seal on the test, and refuse to complete it, they have **PARTICIPATED** but **ONLY TO THE EXTENT REQUIRED BY THE LAW** and cannot be re-tested. They have now “opted out.”
- **3rd Grade** retention is mandated for failing the FSA. **HOWEVER**, by law, students **CAN** be promoted by **good cause exemptions** via alternative assessments (SAT10, IOWA, Terra Nova, or portfolios). Students must pass **ONE** assessment, not all.
- A concordant (passing) score on the ACT(19) or SAT(430) replaces a failing (or missing) 10th grade FSA Reading score. Opting out of FSA does **NOT** affect grades.
- Passing score on PERT replaces Algebra 1 EOC toward graduation requirements.
- State EOCs count for 30% of final grade.
- Students who OPT OUT receive a score code of NR2, which does not negatively affect their teacher’s evaluation or their school’s grade.
- **NO** school district has ever lost a single \$ because students opted out of FSA.

“OPT OUT” has been the ONLY action to hold the attention of education policy makers and legislators.

If YOU don’t advocate for your child, who will?

OPT OUT 101

THE NOTE TO SCHOOL

Parents should send in a short note on the day of testing. Early letters could set you up for harassment from school and/or district.

“(Student Name) will be opting out of the FSA today and I am aware of the possible consequences. Thank you. Sincerely...”

THIRD GRADE:

Students opting out may be told by their friends that they will fail and will be held back. Parents should discuss this with their children so that they can be confident in their actions. Eight year olds understand that there is too much testing. Parents can explain **WHY** it’s happening.

If a student is absent on test day, they will be scheduled for the make up upon return. The rest of the student's class will already have taken the test and will be "back to normal." After the student refuses during the make up testing, they are **usually** sent back to class.

TO OPT OUT OF A PAPER TEST

The student simply has to fill in their name (if there is not already a label), break the seal of the test. When the teacher says to begin, student should politely say, “No thank you.” That’s IT. They should not be badgered to test. That would be coercion and/or intimidation.

TO OPT OUT OF A COMPUTER-BASED TEST

Follow instructions to log-in and 'Start test.' Press 'End test' (they might have to enter one letter for the 'end test' button to become available), and then 'Submit test'. The idea is simply to submit a blank (near-blank) test.

DURING THE TEST

CHECKING STUDENTS OUT OF SCHOOL

- You will need to ask what time testing will begin so that you can go to the office and sign out your child a little **AFTER** testing has begun. After your child breaks the seal and pushes the test away, they **SHOULD** be allowed to leave the room if you request them **in person** and return them when class resumes.

- The **ONLY** time a school may lawfully deny a parent access to their child, on demand, is during a security lockdown or in a restraining order.

DURING THE TEST

Your school should have a policy that (after your child breaks the seal, signs test, and turns it in), allows them to read the rest of the time. (FSA manual p. 34: “You may allow students to read after they have finished a session **AND** their test materials have been collected.”)

www.fsassessments.org

IMPORTANT NOTE

Despite the mandated validity study from Summer 2015, there have been no published reports demonstrating that the 17 FSA exams are valid, fair or reliable for at-risk populations of students (ESE, ELL, low socio-economic, etc).

Of the 17 tests mandated to be evaluated, **ONLY 6** were even examined by the Alpine Validity Study and **TO DATE**, there are **STILL** no published validity studies on the remaining 11 tests.