

FSA Testing and Student Placement FAQ

1. How can students and parents prepare for the FSA and EOC exam?
 - a. 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. For more test taking tips for parents, visit <http://www.testtakingtips.com/parents/index.htm>
 - b. The school district has created student Moodle courses to support student learning on EOC exams. More information can be found in the section above, under EOC Info & Resources.
2. On what specific days will the FSA and EOC exams be administered? Are the FSA and EOC exams computer or paper based?
 - a. The testing window begins on February 29, 2016. Please see the 2015-16 District Assessment Calendar for the specific dates of the FSA and EOC exams, as well as the computer or paper-based assessment format on this page. The amount of time and the number of testing sessions is also available on the District Assessment Calendar. Additional information for each test is available on the FSA Portal www.fsassessments.org. Click on "Students & Families", and then select "Frequently Asked Questions". Please be advised that the Florida Department of Education (FLDOE) may make changes to this document.
3. How will Polk County Schools use Florida Standards Assessment (FSA) data for student placement in academic support and intervention programs required by statute?
 - a. 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, student course grades, instructional program results, a review of FSA scores (if available), progress monitoring data, and other relevant state-approved assessment results.
 - b. 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.
4. Do FSA's count toward students' grades?
 - a. The FSA tests do not count toward a student's grade in a subject. There are several state-required assessments that have an academic consequence related to a student's grade. Biology, Geometry, Civics, U.S. History, Algebra I, and Algebra II each have a state requirement that the EOC exam counts for 30% of the student's final grade, which may impact course placement and grade level promotion.
5. What are the consequences for a student who does not take the Algebra 1 EOC at the completion of the Algebra course?

- a. It is a graduation requirement for students to earn a passing score on the Algebra I EOC exam. A student who does not have a passing score on the Algebra I EOC may utilize the following (note that students must have a score on the Algebra 1 EOC before a comparative score can be used to meet this requirement):
 - i. A comparative score on the PERT Math to meet the Algebra I requirement. This option can only be utilized after the student has attempted the Algebra 1 EOC exam at least once.
 - ii. Concordant/comparative scores on the SAT, ACT or PERT will earn the student a regular diploma, not a certificate of completion.
6. If a student does not take the FSA is he/she prohibited from taking Advanced Placement (AP) courses, advanced courses, or honors courses?
 - a. No, there is no requirement to participate in FSA to take Advanced Placement (AP) courses, advanced courses or honors courses. However, Polk County Public Schools' guidance counselors use the state-required assessments and other performance measures to make course placement and scheduling recommendations for students.
7. Will students who don't participate in the FSA be prohibited from taking fieldtrips or participating in other school-wide activities?
 - a. No, there is no requirement to participate in FSA to participate in any PCPS field trip or activity.
8. How will students who refuse to test or presents a parent letter indicating non-participation be addressed?
 - a. Polk County Public Schools seeks to treat students, staff and families with the utmost respect and courtesy. There will not be any intent to embarrass or humiliate students under any circumstances. However, Section 1008.22(3), F.S., states, "Participation in the assessment program is mandatory for all school districts and all students attending public schools." In compliance with state statute, all students will be offered the appropriate assessment(s). If a student refuses to take the test and sits quietly during the testing session, the student will be allowed to remain seated. If the student causes any disruption that compromises the testing environment, the student will be escorted to another supervised area and will receive school disciplinary actions as appropriate. His/her test will be coded as an invalidation due to disruption.
9. If an Exceptional Education Student (ESE) or parent of an ESE student requests not to participate in testing how is Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) provided?
 - a. 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.
10. What is the "pledge" or "oath" that students and teachers are required to sign prior to taking the FSA?

- a. 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”. 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.
 - b. If you would like to view a copy of the Testing Rules Acknowledgment, this is available in the [Test Administrator's Manual](#).
11. Will students who refuse to take the state test, or break the seal but do not answer a sufficient number of questions to earn a score, receive a score report?
 - a. No. Students who receive a designation of NT or NR2 do not receive score reports, since they do not have scores on the assessments.
12. 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?
 - a. Students who do not answer any questions on an assessment will receive an “NT” (not tested) designation.
13. What is the impact of “NT” or “NR2” on school grades and teachers?
 - a. Students who are awarded an “NT” or “NR2” negatively impact the percent tested requirement for school grades. These students remain in the denominator of the school grade participation calculation.
 - b. If several students in a teacher’s class receive “NT”, 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.
14. Who should I contact if I have additional questions related to the FSA?
 - a. The first point of contact is the school principal. School principals have been asked to contact their respective Regional Assistant Superintendents regarding additional questions to ensure responses are appropriately reviewed and vetted.