

State Testing 2011

What You Need to Know

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Every spring, the state tests all students in grades 3-8 and 10 to make sure their learning is on track. The results from this testing are important to us all.



Students in grades 3-8 participate in the **Measurements of Student Progress (MSP)**. Those in high school take the **High School Proficiency Exam (HSPE)**. In addition, the MSP will be administered online in spring 2011 in grades 4-8 in reading and math and grades 5 and 8 in science.

Our state tests were named to convey their specific goals.

The MSP *measures student progress*. While the MSP results are important, state testing should never be the sole judge of a student's academic skills and knowledge. A student's entire academic performance should always be considered.

The HSPE ensures that high school students are *proficient*, or have the basic skills necessary to move on to the next steps in their life. The high school tests are aligned to graduation requirements.

Students in the classes of 2011 and 2012 must pass the reading and writing state exams, a state-approved alternative or an assessment for students in special education AND pass the state math exam or earn two math credits after 10th grade.

Students in the class of 2013 and beyond must pass reading, writing, math and science to meet the requirement. Beginning in spring 2011, end-of-course exams in math will be given in algebra I and geometry, or their integrated math equivalents.

If you have questions or concerns about your child's learning, please contact your child's teacher or school counselor. To learn more about the state's testing system, please visit www.WAtesting.com.

Who Gets Tested and When?

The federal No Child Left Behind Act requires yearly testing of students in grades 3-8 and 10 in reading and math, and in three grades in science (grades 5, 8 and 10 in Washington). Our state also tests students in writing (grades 4, 7 and 10). Our state has also moved to online testing.

Grade	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th	9th	10th	11th	12th
Reading	✓	✓■	✓■	✓■	✓■	✓■	NT	✓●		
Math	✓	✓■	✓■	✓■	✓■	✓■	✓	✓		
Writing		✓			✓●		NT	✓●		
Science			✓■			✓■	NT	✓●		

Necessary only if student has not met state assessment graduation requirement.

- Offered online in spring 2011
- Offered online in spring 2012
- NT Subject not tested (9th graders only take end-of-course math exams)

Updated August 2010

2011 State Testing and Reporting Timeline

MARCH

- 15-17: Writing HSPE
- 22: Reading HSPE

APRIL

- 12: Science HSPE

MAY

- 2-19: MSP testing window for grades 3-8 (paper)
- May 2- June 3: MSP testing window for grades 4-8 (online)

- End of Year: HS EOC math exams (last 3 weeks of school)

JUNE

- June 1: Registration begins for August HSPE
- By 10: HSPE Score Reports sent home for grades 10-12
- By 17: Release of statewide HSPE results

AUGUST

- 8-11: August HSPE testing
- Late: MSP/HSPE results released for all students

SEPT.

- Mid: All MSP/HSPE reports sent home (all grades)

What Does a MSP/HSPE Score Mean?

Students receive a score for each MSP/HSPE test taken. Scores are based on how an individual student performed. Scores fall into one of four levels (with Level 3 and above as passing):

- Level **4** **Exceeds State Standards:** Represents advanced mastery of a subject's skills and knowledge.
- Level **3** **Meets State Standards:** Represents mastery of a subject's skills and knowledge.
- Level **2** **Below State Standard:** Represents some mastery of a subject's skills and knowledge.
- Level **1** **Well-Below State Standard:** Represents little to no mastery of a subject's skills and knowledge.

State Testing: Frequently Asked Questions

Why are we required to do state testing?

Because of state and federal law. Our state assessment system was implemented in response to the state's Education Reform Law of 1993. Our state tests also fulfill the requirements of the federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act. NCLB requires annual assessments in reading and math for students in grades 3-8 and high school. Students also must be tested annually in science in three grade levels. Washington does this by testing students in grades 5, 8 and 10.

When do families receive results for high school (HSPE) state testing?

Early June. Students will receive scores in reading, writing and science in June 2011. Math scores will not be available until late August 2011 because the state must apply passing scores for the new learning standards that were tested. See below for more information on the new end-of-course math exams.

When do families receive results for grades 3-8 (MSP) testing?

Early to mid September. Student score reports are delivered to school districts in late August. School districts are then responsible for mailing the score reports to families. If you do not receive a score report, please contact your school or district office.

What are the new end-of-course math exams and when are they given?

The end-of-course, or EOC, math exams are available in algebra I and geometry, or their integrated math equivalents. Any student taking algebra I or geometry, from 7th grade and up, will take the appropriate EOC. The EOCs are to be given within the last three weeks of school. Students in the class of 2013 and beyond must pass both EOCs in order to graduate.

How do I register my child for the summer HSPE and when?

August test registration usually begins around June 1. You can register for summer testing at www.k12.wa.us/testregistration or by calling (866) 400-9275.

Online State Testing

Online, or computer-based, testing debuted in Washington in spring 2010 in grades 6-8 in reading and math. The state's goal is for the majority of grades and subjects to be tested via computers in all school districts by 2012.

In spring 2011, the MSP will be offered online in grades 4-8 in reading and math, and grades 5 and 8 in science. High school will not begin online testing until spring 2012.

Feasibility studies are being conducted for online testing in all third-grade subjects. We are also piloting an online 7th grade writing test in spring 2011.

The MSP and HSPE were shorter, but were they easier?

No. The spring 2010 MSP and HSPE results did not show increased score improvement. The tests continue to be valid and reliable measures of student performance. Just because a test is shorter doesn't mean it is easier.

Does my son or daughter still need to pass a state test to graduate from high school?

Yes. No matter what the state test is called, the graduation requirements that go along with it have not changed. Students in the classes of 2011 and 2012 must pass reading and writing, and they must pass math OR earn two credits of math after 10th grade. Beginning with the class of 2013, students must pass reading, writing math and science, or approved state alternatives.

What types of questions appear on state tests?

The MSP and HSPE tests include multiple-choice and short-answer questions. Four-point essay questions have been eliminated on reading, math and science tests. This change allows students to show they are able to solve the problems, while not being scored on their writing ability on the math, reading and science tests.

Keep State Testing in Perspective

Students and parents can feel pressured by state testing, but the test should not be the center of attention. Core skills and knowledge matter most.

- Encourage your child to do his/her best. If your child's score report shows help is needed in certain areas, that is not a bad thing. Schools know how to target help.
- Think about your child's test day routine. Unless you sense your child needs a different routine during testing (e.g., more sleep or more physical activity), follow whatever routine already helps him/her be successful in school.
- Talk with your child about the testing experience. Some students find it helpful to talk about the tests. If your child says s/he struggled with any parts of the test, talk to your child's teacher to find out if s/he has the same issues in the classroom.

How Do I ...

View my child's test?

Parents can request to review their child's test booklet(s), starting Sept. 1, 2010. The test booklets are sent to the student's respective school district for review. Please visit: www.k12.wa.us/assessment/StudentRecordRequest.aspx.

Appeal my child's score?

Only scores from the High School Proficiency Exam, used to meet graduation requirements, may be appealed. Scores for the grades 3-8 Measurements of Student Progress may not be appealed. Please visit: www.k12.wa.us/assessment/Appeals.aspx.



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For more information

OSPI: www.k12.wa.us

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