

Opting Out of State Testing

This school board believes that state student assessments are a useful and valid tool in helping the school board assess the progress the school district is making in raising the level and quality of education throughout the district, and is so important that it has been codified in state law (Mississippi Code Section 37-16-1, et seq.). Mississippi law mandates that “basic skills test shall be completed by each student” and “in the event of excused or unexcused absences, make-up tests be given” [Mississippi Code Section 37-16-3(2)]. Whereas state law requires every school district within the state to “periodically assess student performance and achievement in each school” (Mississippi Code Section 37-16-5), student assessment therefore is not an option in the District, but rather a requirement.

The superintendent is required to develop procedures for students who arrive on campus on testing days whose parents refuse to allow the students to take state test. At a minimum, such procedures shall include:

1. Ensuring students “opting out” of testing do not disrupt the administration of state test;
2. Documenting the names grades, and actual assessments for students who refuse to be tested; and
3. Providing a safe and orderly environment for all students in attendance each day.

The school district is not required to provide alternative activities on testing days for students whose parents refuse to allow their children to take state test.

SOURCE: Mississippi School Boards Association

LEGAL REF: Miss. Code Ann. Sections 37-16-3(2); 37-16-5

DATE: December 20, 2016