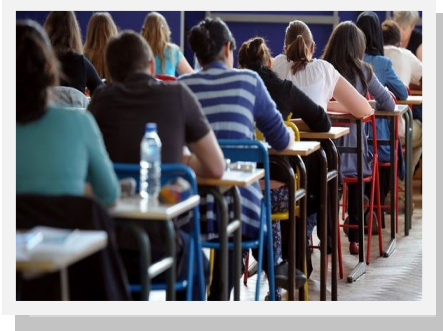


OPT OUT...DOES IT MATTER?



Federal and state laws require all districts and schools to test all students in specific grades and courses. There is no law that allows a parent or student to opt out of state testing and there is no state test opt-out procedure or form. If a parent withdraws his or her child's participation in certain state tests, there may be consequences for the child, the child's teacher, the school and district.

District Consequences

All students are included in the Performance Index (PI) Score. Points are earned based on the percentage of tests that fall into each of the five ranges of scores from Advanced to Limited, plus those earning the bonus weight of Advanced Plus. The calculation is designed to reward schools for moving students from one proficiency level to a higher proficiency level, and the number of points awarded increased as the scores increase. The Ohio Department of Education does not assign an artificial score of zero to non-participants, but no points are earned for tests not taken, so having a large number of untested students will reduce a district's PI score. The A-F letter grades are assigned based on how many points are earned out of a possible 120 points, so having untested students might result in a letter grade reduction.

- Families and businesses often consult A-F ratings in choosing where to live, locate a business and how to vote on tax levies.
- These ratings also impact school choice programs, flexibility on how funding is spent and which schools receive extra help from the state.

The federal No Child Left Behind Law required all states to calculate a participation rate for reading and math for 10 different groups of students. The federal law also requires states to ensure that at least 95 percent of the students in each student group participate. If a subgroup's participation rate drops below 95 percent, the school's or district's "preliminary" Annual Measurable Objectives (AMO) letter grade is reduced by one level (e.g. if a school would have earned an "A" based on the students' test scores and the percentage of students who graduated, that grade would drop to a "B").

- If student participation in a district drops below 95 percent overall or for specific subgroups of students, the district could face new restrictions on how it spends its money pursuant to federal law.

Teachers are evaluated based, in part, on student test scores. If a student does not take a state test, that student's growth will not be included in the teacher's evaluation. Teachers will not have access to advanced diagnostic information from state tests, such as student growth projections, to help inform instruction for students who do not take the state tests.