

State Testing 2013

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Every spring, the state tests all students in grades 3–8 and 10 to make sure their learning is on track. It also tests all English language learners in grades K–12 to make sure they are learning English. 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 High School Proficiency Exams (**HSPE**) in Reading and Writing, and End-of-Course (**EOC**) exams in algebra 1 or integrated math 1, geometry or integrated math 2, and biology.

Students in grades K–12 who are English language learners take the Washington English Language Proficiency Assessment (**WELPA**). The WELPA measures growth in oral and written English. Since knowing and using English well is necessary for success in school, it is important that students who need additional help learning English get the help they need.

The MSP is also offered online in reading, math and science (grades 5 and 8). Beginning in last spring, students in grades 3–8 began taking the reading and math tests online.

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 measure of a student's academic skills and knowledge. A student's entire 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.
- The EOC tests students at the *end of a specific course* on the knowledge and skills they've gained from that course, rather than a comprehensive test that assesses overall knowledge.

Students in the classes of **2013** and **2014** must pass reading, writing and math (algebra 1 or integrated math 1, OR geometry or integrated math 2) to be eligible to graduate. Students in the class of **2015** and beyond must pass reading, writing, math (algebra 1 or integrated math 1, AND geometry or integrated math 2) and science.

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.

A student receiving special education may be eligible for additional alternatives related to the testing requirements (please see "[How Students in Special Education Participate in State Testing](#)" on the OSPI website).

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).

Students for whom English is not their first language are tested annually in the spring using the WELPA from kindergarten through grade 12, until they no longer qualify for language support services.

	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th	9th	10th	11th	12th
Reading	✓■	✓■	✓■	✓■	✓■	✓■	NT	✓	Necessary only if student has not met state assessment graduation requirement.	
Math	✓■	✓■	✓■	✓■	✓■	✓■	✓	✓		
Writing		✓			✓		NT	✓		
Science			✓■			✓■	✓	✓		
English Language Proficiency	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		

■ Offered online in spring 2013

NT Subject not tested (9th graders only take end-of-course exams in math and science, if they are in those specific courses)

State Testing and Reporting Timeline

Jan 2– Feb 8:	Math and Biology EOC retake testing window
Feb 4– Mar 8:	WELPA testing window for grades K–12
Mar 12–14:	Writing & Reading HSPEs
Apr 24– May 16:	MSP paper/pencil testing window for grades 3–8*
Apr 24– May 31:	MSP online testing window for grades 3–8*
End of School Year:	EOC Math & Biology exams (last three weeks of school, between May 6 and Jun 21)
May 31– Jun 23:	August HSPE registration window
Jun 6:	HSPE score reports sent to districts for grades 10–12
Jun 20:	Release of statewide HSPE results
Aug 13–15:	Summer HSPE testing
Sept:	Student score reports sent home

* Testing is one subject per day.

What Does an MSP/HSPE/EOC Score Mean?

Students receive a score for each MSP/HSPE/EOC test taken. Scores are based on how an individual student performed, so you won't find percentiles often provided by other standardized tests. Scores fall into one of four levels:

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

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. All English language learners in K–12 must be tested annually using the Washington English Language Proficiency Assessment (WELPA) to measure growth in English knowledge and skills.

When do families receive results for high school state testing?

Early June. Students will receive High School Proficiency Exam (HSPE) scores in reading and writing in June 2013. Math and science End-of-Course (EOC) exam scores will not be available until September 2013. See below for more information on the EOC math exams.

When do families receive results for grades 3–8 MSP testing?

School districts are responsible for mailing the score reports to families in September. If you do not receive a score report, please contact your school district office.

When do families receive results for WELPA testing?

School districts receive results in June and are responsible to deliver results to families. If you do not receive a score report, please contact your school district office.

What are the "EOC" exams and when are they given?

"EOC" stands for "End-of-Course." Math EOC exams are available in algebra 1 or geometry, or the integrated math equivalents. The science EOC exam is available in biology. Any student taking those classes may take the appropriate EOC. EOCs are to be given within the last three weeks of school. Students in the classes of 2013 and 2014 must pass *one* math EOC.

Online State Testing

Washington is not the first state to make the move to online testing, but it is among the leaders. The state's goal is for the majority of elementary and middle school grades in reading, math and science to be tested via computers in all school districts by 2014.

In spring 2013, the WELPA will begin piloting an online version of the test. However, the majority of students will continue to be tested using paper and pencil until the transition is made.

Students in the class of 2015 and beyond must pass *both* math EOCs and the biology EOC 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. Retakes for EOC exams are in January/February each year.

What tests are online?

In spring 2013, the state will offer the reading and math MSP online in grades 3–8 and the science MSP in grades 5 and 8.

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

Yes. Each class has different requirements. Please ask your school counselor.

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 he or she struggled with any parts of the test, talk to your child's teacher to find out if he or she has the same issues in the classroom.

How Do I ...

View my child's test?

Parents may request to review their child's test booklet(s), starting Sept. 9, 2013. The test booklets are sent to the student's respective school district for review.

www.k12.wa.us/assessment/StudentRecordRequest.aspx

Appeal my child's score?

Only scores from the high school exams used to meet graduation requirements, may be appealed. Scores for the grades 3–8 MSP *may not* be appealed.

www.k12.wa.us/assessment/Appeals.aspx



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OSPI: www.k12.wa.us
MSP/HSPE/EOC: www.WAtesting.com
WELPA: www.k12.wa.us/assessment/EL
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