

Parent Letter: Opting Out of Required Testing

1/24/2023

Parent Name:

Street Address:

Lumberton, NC 28358

Dear Mr./Mrs. (Parent)

Thank you for taking the opportunity to express your concerns regarding the testing mandates of the North Carolina Testing Program. Having read your request for a waiver, Robeson County Schools is truly sympathetic to your concerns.

The North Carolina testing program has been operational since the 1970s, and to date the State Board of Education (SBE) has not allowed any student to opt out of required State testing. The only exceptions granted have been for limited numbers of students who met certain eligibility requirements or who had extenuating circumstances primarily related to a significant medical emergency and/or condition and were unable to participate in a specific test administration.

Because of state laws, all students in North Carolina (including students with disabilities) are required to participate in the testing program. Not only are public schools required to test, but also nonpublic schools have testing requirements. Testing is required of nonpublic school enrollees in grades 3, 6, 9, and 11. Nonpublic school law does not exempt special needs (or any other) students from this requirement. Concerning the nonpublic school standardized testing requirement, G.S. §115C-549, 550, 557, and 558 state that the test is to be administered in those grade levels each year "to all students enrolled or regularly attending." Also, all homeschooled students are required to be assessed annually on a nationally normed standardized assessment.

State policy requires schools to use end-of-course (EOC) assessments as "at least twenty percent (20%) of the student's final grade." As such, a student's grade for a subject or for a course and overall grade-point-average calculation may be negatively affected by not taking the state tests. However, end-of-grade (EOG) scores are used in grades 3-8 is a local decision.

Please know that Robeson County Schools is trying to be responsive to parents' concerns, yet we must adhere to state and federal guidelines that address the educational needs of all children.

Sincerely,

**Kendall
Hamilton**