

EDUCATIONAL TESTING AMENDMENTS

2016 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

Chief Sponsor: Kraig Powell

Senate Sponsor: Ann Millner

LONG TITLE

General Description:

This bill amends provisions related to certain student assessments administered in public schools.

Highlighted Provisions:

This bill:

- ▶ requires the State Board of Education to make rules providing that scores on certain assessments may be considered in determining a student's academic grade or whether a student may advance to the next grade level;
- ▶ amends provisions related to a parent's or guardian's right to excuse a student from taking certain assessments; and
- ▶ makes technical and conforming changes.

Money Appropriated in this Bill:

None

Other Special Clauses:

This bill provides a special effective date.

Utah Code Sections Affected:

AMENDS:

53A-1-603, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2015, Chapters 258, 415, and 444

53A-15-1403, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2015, Chapter 444



28 *Be it enacted by the Legislature of the state of Utah:*

29 Section 1. Section **53A-1-603** is amended to read:

30 **53A-1-603. Duties of State Board of Education.**

31 (1) The State Board of Education shall:

32 (a) require each school district and charter school to implement the Utah Performance
33 Assessment System for Students, hereafter referred to as U-PASS;

34 (b) require the state superintendent of public instruction to submit and recommend
35 criterion-referenced achievement tests or online computer adaptive tests, college readiness
36 assessments, an online writing assessment for grades 5 and 8, and a test for students in grade 3
37 to measure reading grade level to the board for approval and adoption and distribution to each
38 school district and charter school by the state superintendent;

39 (c) develop an assessment method to uniformly measure statewide performance, school
40 district performance, and school performance of students in grades 3 through 12 in mastering
41 basic academic subjects; and

42 (d) provide for the state to participate in the National Assessment of Educational
43 Progress state-by-state comparison testing program.

44 (2) Except as provided in Subsection (3) and Subsection [53A-1-611\(3\)](#), under
45 U-PASS, the State Board of Education shall annually require each school district and charter
46 school, as applicable, to administer:

47 (a) as determined by the State Board of Education, statewide criterion-referenced tests
48 or online computer adaptive tests in grades 3 through 12 and courses in basic academic subjects
49 of the core standards for Utah public schools;

50 (b) an online writing assessment to all students in grades 5 and 8;

51 (c) college readiness assessments as detailed in Section [53A-1-611](#); and

52 (d) a test to all students in grade 3 to measure reading grade level.

53 (3) Beginning with the 2014-15 school year, the State Board of Education shall
54 annually require each school district and charter school, as applicable, to administer a computer
55 adaptive assessment system that is:

56 (a) adopted by the State Board of Education; and

57 (b) aligned to the core standards for Utah public schools.

58 (4) The board shall adopt rules for the conduct and administration of U-PASS to

59 include the following:

60 (a) the computation of student performance based on information that is disaggregated
61 with respect to race, ethnicity, gender, limited English proficiency, and those students who
62 qualify for free or reduced price school lunch;

63 (b) security features to maintain the integrity of the system, which could include
64 statewide uniform testing dates, multiple test forms, and test administration protocols;

65 (c) the exemption of student test scores, by exemption category, such as limited
66 English proficiency, mobility, and students with disabilities, with the percent or number of
67 student test scores exempted being publically reported at a district level;

68 (d) compiling of criterion-referenced, online computer adaptive, and online writing test
69 scores and test score averages at the classroom level to allow for:

70 (i) an annual review of those scores by parents of students and professional and other
71 appropriate staff at the classroom level at the earliest point in time;

72 (ii) the assessment of year-to-year student progress in specific classes, courses, and
73 subjects; and

74 (iii) a teacher to review, prior to the beginning of a new school year, test scores from
75 the previous school year of students who have been assigned to the teacher's class for the new
76 school year;

77 (e) allowing a school district or charter school to have its tests administered and scored
78 electronically to accelerate the review of test scores and their usefulness to parents and
79 educators under Subsection (4)(d), without violating the integrity of U-PASS; and

80 (f) providing that scores on the tests and assessments required under Subsection (2)(a)
81 and Subsection (3) may [~~not~~] be considered in determining:

82 (i) a student's academic grade for the appropriate course; or

83 (ii) whether a student may advance to the next grade level.

84 (5) (a) A school district or charter school, as applicable, is encouraged to administer an
85 online writing assessment to students in grade 11.

86 (b) The State Board of Education may award a grant to a school district or charter
87 school to pay for an online writing assessment and instruction program that may be used to
88 assess the writing of students in grade 11.

89 (6) The State Board of Education shall make rules:

90 (a) establishing procedures for applying for and awarding money for computer adaptive
91 tests;

92 (b) specifying how money for computer adaptive tests shall be allocated among school
93 districts and charter schools that qualify to receive the money; and

94 (c) requiring reporting of the expenditure of money awarded for computer adaptive
95 testing and evidence that the money was used to implement computer adaptive testing.

96 (7) The State Board of Education shall assure that computer adaptive tests are
97 administered in compliance with the requirements of Chapter 13, Part 3, Utah Family
98 Educational Rights and Privacy Act.

99 (8) (a) The State Board of Education shall establish a committee consisting of 15
100 parents of Utah public education students to review all computer adaptive test questions.

101 (b) The committee established in Subsection (8)(a) shall include the following parent
102 members:

103 (i) five members appointed by the chair of the State Board of Education;

104 (ii) five members appointed by the speaker of the House of Representatives; and

105 (iii) five members appointed by the president of the Senate.

106 (c) The State Board of Education shall provide staff support to the parent committee.

107 (d) The term of office of each member appointed in Subsection (8)(b) is four years.

108 (e) The chair of the State Board of Education, the speaker of the House of
109 Representatives, and the president of the Senate shall adjust the length of terms to stagger the
110 terms of committee members so that approximately 1/2 of the committee members are
111 appointed every two years.

112 (f) No member may receive compensation or benefits for the member's service on the
113 committee.

114 (9) (a) School districts and charter schools shall require each licensed employee to
115 complete two hours of professional development on youth suicide prevention within their
116 license cycle in accordance with Section [53A-6-104](#).

117 (b) The State Board of Education shall develop or adopt sample materials to be used by
118 a school district or charter school for professional development training on youth suicide
119 prevention.

120 (c) The training required by this Subsection (9) shall be incorporated into professional

121 development training required by rule in accordance with Section [53A-6-104](#).

122 Section 2. Section **53A-15-1403** is amended to read:

123 **53A-15-1403. Parental right to academic accommodations.**

124 (1) (a) A student's parent or guardian is the primary person responsible for the
125 education of the student, and the state is in a secondary and supportive role to the parent or
126 guardian. As such, a student's parent or guardian has the right to reasonable academic
127 accommodations from the student's LEA as specified in this section.

128 (b) Each accommodation shall be considered on an individual basis and no student
129 shall be considered to a greater or lesser degree than any other student.

130 (c) The parental rights specified in this section do not include all the rights or
131 accommodations that may be available to a student's parent or guardian as a user of the public
132 education system.

133 (d) An accommodation under this section may only be provided if the accommodation
134 is:

135 (i) consistent with federal law; and

136 (ii) consistent with a student's IEP if the student already has an IEP.

137 (2) An LEA shall reasonably accommodate a parent's or guardian's written request to
138 retain a student in kindergarten through grade 8 on grade level based on the student's academic
139 ability or the student's social, emotional, or physical maturity.

140 (3) An LEA shall reasonably accommodate a parent's or guardian's initial selection of a
141 teacher or request for a change of teacher.

142 (4) An LEA shall reasonably accommodate the request of a student's parent or guardian
143 to visit and observe any class the student attends.

144 (5) Notwithstanding Chapter 11, Part 1, Compulsory Education Requirements, an LEA
145 shall record an excused absence for a scheduled family event or a scheduled proactive visit to a
146 health care provider if:

147 (a) the parent or guardian submits a written statement at least one school day before the
148 scheduled absence; and

149 (b) the student agrees to make up course work for school days missed for the scheduled
150 absence in accordance with LEA policy.

151 (6) (a) An LEA shall reasonably accommodate a parent's or guardian's written request

152 to place a student in a specialized class, a specialized program, or an advanced course.

153 (b) An LEA shall consider multiple academic data points when determining an
154 accommodation under Subsection (6)(a).

155 (7) Consistent with Section 53A-13-108, which requires the State Board of Education
156 to establish graduation requirements that use competency-based standards and assessments, an
157 LEA shall allow a student to earn course credit towards high school graduation without
158 completing a course in school by:

- 159 (a) testing out of the course; or
- 160 (b) demonstrating competency in course standards.

161 (8) An LEA shall reasonably accommodate a parent's or guardian's request to meet
162 with a teacher at a mutually agreeable time if the parent or guardian is unable to attend a
163 regularly scheduled parent teacher conference.

164 (9) (a) At the request of a student's parent or guardian, an LEA shall excuse a student
165 from taking an assessment that:

- 166 (i) is federally mandated;
- 167 (ii) is mandated by the state under this title; or

168 [~~iii~~] requires the use of:

169 [~~A~~] (iii) is an end-of-grade-level assessment utilizing a state assessment system[~~;~~ or].

170 [~~B~~] software that is provided or paid for by the state.

171 (b) In accordance with Title 63G, Chapter 3, Utah Administrative Rulemaking Act, the
172 State Board of Education shall make rules to:

173 (i) [~~to~~] establish a statewide procedure for excusing a student under Subsection (9)(a)
174 that:

175 (A) does not place an undue burden on a parent or guardian; and

176 (B) may be completed online; [~~and~~]

177 (ii) [~~to~~] prevent negative impact, to the extent authorized by state statute, to an LEA or
178 an LEA's employees through school grading or employee evaluations due to a student not
179 taking a test under Subsection (9)(a)[~~;~~]; and

180 (iii) subject to Subsection (9)(c)(iii), establish conditions under which incentives or
181 rewards may be offered to a student for taking an assessment described in Subsection (9)(a).

182 (c) An LEA:

183 (i) shall follow the procedures outlined in rules made by the State Board of Education
184 under Subsection (9)(b) to excuse a student under Subsection (9)(a);

185 (ii) may not require procedures to excuse a student under Subsection (9)(a) in addition
186 to the procedures outlined in rules made by the State Board of Education under Subsection
187 (9)(b); ~~and~~

188 ~~[(iii) may not reward a student for taking an assessment described in Subsection
189 (9)(a).]~~

190 (iii) may not penalize a student who is excused from taking an assessment under
191 Subsection (9)(a) for not taking the assessment; and

192 (iv) may require a student who is excused from taking an assessment under Subsection
193 (9)(a) to complete an alternate assignment if the alternate assignment is not more rigorous than
194 the state's content or end-of-grade-level assessment.

195 (d) The State Board of Education shall:

196 (i) maintain and publish a list of state assessments~~[-]~~ and state assessment systems~~[-~~
197 ~~and software]~~ that qualify under Subsection (9)(a); and

198 (ii) audit and verify an LEA's compliance with the requirements of this Subsection (9).

199 (10) (a) An LEA shall provide for:

200 (i) the distribution of a copy of a school's discipline and conduct policy to each student
201 in accordance with Section [53A-11-903](#); and

202 (ii) a parent's or guardian's signature acknowledging receipt of the school's discipline
203 and conduct policy.

204 (b) An LEA shall notify a parent or guardian of a student's violation of a school's
205 discipline and conduct policy and allow a parent or guardian to respond to the notice in
206 accordance with Chapter 11, Part 9, School Discipline and Conduct Plans.

207 **Section 3. Effective date.**

208 (1) (a) Except as provided in Subsection (2), if approved by two-thirds of all the
209 members elected to each house, Section [53A-1-603](#) takes effect upon approval by the governor,
210 or the day following the constitutional time limit of Utah Constitution, Article VII, Section 8,
211 without the governor's signature, or in the case of a veto, the date of veto override.

212 (b) If Section [53A-1-603](#) is not approved by two-thirds of all the members elected to
213 each house, Section [53A-1-603](#) takes effect on July 1, 2016.

214

(2) Section [53A-15-1403](#) takes effect on July 1, 2016.

Legislative Review Note
Office of Legislative Research and General Counsel