

Grade 3 Testing: Paper or Online Administration

INTRODUCTION

Since 2014, Ohio has transitioned state testing from paper-and-pencil to online administrations.

A few exceptions to online testing are available for students' religious beliefs and students who require paper test forms as an accommodation documented in their individualized education programs (IEP) or 504 plans. In addition, there are rare exceptions to online testing based on a verified lack of technology infrastructure at a district or school.

LEGISLATION

Senate Bill 216, effective Nov. 2, 2018, allows districts the option of paper or online test administration for the third-grade state assessments, beginning in the 2019-2020 school year. Specifically, Ohio Revised Code Section 3301.0711(G)(4), as amended by SB 216 provides:

Beginning with the 2019-2020 school year, a school district, other public school, or chartered nonpublic school may administer the third-grade English language arts or mathematics assessment, or both, in a paper format in any school year for which the district board of education or school governing body adopts a resolution indicating that the district or school chooses to administer the assessment in a paper format. The board or governing body shall submit a copy of the resolution to the department of education not later than the first day of May prior to the school year for which it will apply. If the resolution is submitted, the district or school shall administer the assessment in a paper format to all students in the third grade, except that any student whose individualized education program or plan developed under section 504 of the "Rehabilitation Act of 1973," 87 Stat. 355, 29 U.S.C. 794, as amended, specifies that taking the assessment in an online format is an appropriate accommodation for the student may take the assessment in an online format.

Because the election to use paper tests must be made by a district board of education or a governing authority, please advise your district board of education or governing authority to take action if paper-and-pencil test administration is desired.

The option applies to the following tests in grade 3:

- Ohio's State Tests in English language arts and/or mathematics;
- Ohio's Alternate Assessment for Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities (AASCD) English language arts and/or mathematics.

The online AASCD 2.0 is computer adaptive, while the paper version is not.

If the board resolution requires paper testing on OST and/or AASCD for students with disabilities, online testing is considered an accommodation and must be documented in IEPs.

Districts and schools should consider the following:

- Districts, community schools and chartered nonpublic schools may choose to administer paper tests to their third-grade students for the above tests only.
- The board's resolution to use paper tests is a general election but cannot supersede a student's individualized education program (IEP) or 504 plan. In other words, if the district chooses paper tests, a student on an IEP or 504 plan must test online if the plan specifies that mode.
- The board's decision applies to all schools within a district.

- The administration format choice (paper or online) is for the full school year (i.e., English language arts for fall, spring and summer administrations; math for spring administration). Changes in the administration mode cannot be made midyear.
- If a district or school continues to administer the tests online, paper accommodations as accessibility features are still available as detailed in Ohio's Accessibility Manual. A board resolution regarding accommodations is not required.
- Districts and schools wishing to administer paper tests to their third-grade students must submit certified resolutions from their school boards or governing bodies to the Ohio Department of Education **by May 1 of each year** for test administration occurring the following school year.
- Districts and schools that have requested and qualified for an exception to online testing (for example, for religious beliefs) must submit a certified resolution as well.
- Any district or school that does not submit a certified resolution **by May 1 of each year** will be expected to test its grade 3 students online the following school year. A resolution needs to be submitted to the Department **only if a school or district is choosing paper tests for any of the four grade 3 tests.**

The Department will notify superintendents/highest level administrators via periodic emails as a reminder to submit their resolutions by the legislated May 1st deadline.

For questions, please contact the Office of Assessment at (614) 466-1317 or statetests@education.ohio.gov.