



Parent Request for Exemption From  
State Science Test, Extended Assessment,  
English Language Proficiency Assessment 2017–18

**What are the components of the OAKS Science State Assessment and who takes it?**

Science	All students grades 5, 8, and 11	Annually and at least once in high school
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**Can I opt my student out of the state Science test?**

Disabilities and religious beliefs are the only bases on which an Oregon school district may approve an exemption to the state Science assessment. You may request an exemption from state testing to accommodate your student’s Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) or Section 504 identified disability or sincerely held religious beliefs.

Schools are required by law to administer statewide assessments to assess students’ learning, in accordance with the procedures and schedule defined by the Oregon Department of Education. Oregon school districts are permitted to excuse a student from a state required program, such as state testing, to accommodate the student’s disabilities or religious beliefs.

*The applicable rule, OAR 581-022-1910, provides:*

*(1) The school district may excuse students from a state required program or learning activity, where necessary, to accommodate students' disabilities or religious beliefs:*

*(a) Approval of the exemption shall be based upon and shall include:*

*(A) A written request from the student's parent or guardian or the student, if the student is 18 years of age or older or a legally emancipated minor, listing the reasons for the request and a proposed alternative for an individualized learning activity which substitutes for the period of time exempt from the program and meets the goals of the learning activity or course being exempt;*

*(B) An evaluation of the request and approval by appropriate school personnel (the alternative should be consistent with the student's educational progress and career goals as described in OARs 581-022-1670 and 581-022-1510).*

If you have a question or comment specifically about how state tests are administered in Bethel School District, we encourage you to speak to your building principal or contact Brian Flick, Director of Teaching and Learning in Bethel.

**Will a student be sanctioned for not taking the state Science test?**

Students for whom there is an approved exemption will be excused. Students who miss school during state testing, but do not have an approved exemption and whose absence is not otherwise excused as provided by district policy, will have an unexcused absence reflected on their student record.

### ***What are the consequences if I opt my student out of the state Science test?***

- **Information:** Valuable information about your student's K–12 learning progress will be lost. Assessment is an important part of teaching and learning. State tests provide parents and educators with meaningful diagnostic information about a student's progress in mastering certain content and skills. A significant consequence of not taking these tests is the loss of valuable information about your student's progress, and the lost opportunity to shape future instruction accordingly.
- **School rating:** If too few students are assessed, your school's rating on the state school report card will be negatively impacted. A school's rating can influence how a school is perceived and how well it attracts and retains student enrollment and neighborhood residents. Under Oregon's school accountability system, schools and districts that have state testing participation rates below the minimum requirement, 94.5% of all students and 94.5% of each subgroup of students, will have their overall school rating lowered by one level (out of five) per each consecutive year participation rates are not met.

### ***How do I request a testing exemption to accommodate my student's religious beliefs?***

Students who have sincerely held religious convictions against standardized testing may consider asking their parents to request a religious exemption to state assessments. If approved, the student who receives a religious exemption will be excused from the test. Please note that given the priority of test administration, the school will have limited staff available to supervise and facilitate alternate learning activities for students not participating in testing; therefore, students not participating in testing may need to be assigned study hall.

To apply for a religious exemption:

Complete the exemption request form and submit it before February 9, 2018, or 2 weeks before the test is administered, to:

Bethel School District Office  
4640 Barger  
Eugene, OR 97402

On the form, you will need to affirm that the objection to the test is based on a sincerely held religious belief.

The Superintendent's designee will evaluate your request and determine whether it is approved or not approved. The district will respond to your request in writing within 10 working days. If your request is denied, you may appeal the decision to the superintendent within 10 working days.

### ***How do I request a testing exemption to accommodate my student's disability?***

Parents of students who have an IDEA or Section 504 identified disability that interferes with their ability to participate in standardized testing, even with accommodations made for their disability, may consider requesting a disability exemption to state tests. Please note that given the priority of test administration, the school will have limited staff available to supervise and facilitate alternate learning activities for students not participating in testing.

Complete the exemption request form and submit it by February 9, 2018, or 2 weeks before the test is administered, to:

Bethel School District Office  
4640 Barger  
Eugene, OR 97402

On the form, you will need to explain how your student's disability interferes with his or her ability to participate in state tests and why you believe there are no accommodations that would allow your student to participate.

The superintendent's designee will evaluate your request and determine whether it is approved or not approved. The district will respond to your request in writing within 10 working days. If your request is denied, you may appeal the decision to the superintendent within 10 working days.

### ***Where can I learn more?***

[www.ode.state.or.us](http://www.ode.state.or.us)

The opt-out form is for parents and guardians to use in applying for an exemption to the OAKS Science testing requirements in grades 5, 8 and 11. Its purpose is to enable the district to discharge its legal right and responsibility to evaluate an exemption request.

Disabilities and religious beliefs are the only bases on which an Oregon school district may approve an exemption to the Science assessment. The disability exemption may be approved for students who have an IDEA or Section 504 identified disability that interferes with their ability to participate in standardized testing, even with accommodations made for their disability.

The religious exemption may be approved for students whose sincerely held religious beliefs cause them to be opposed to a state required program, including state testing. Merely wishing to avoid testing does not qualify for an exemption.

Complete and sign this form and submit it to the Superintendent's Office before February 9, 2018, or 2 weeks before the test is administered. The district will respond to your request within 10 working days.

***You will need to complete a different form for each child  
for whom you are requesting an exemption.***

<b>Student Name</b>	
<b>School</b>	
<b>Grade</b>	
<b>Parent Name(s)</b>	
<b>email</b>	
<b>Phone</b>	
<b>Mailing Address</b>	

Please initial:

\_\_\_\_ I request that my student be exempted from state Science testing for the 2017–18 school year.

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**This exemption request includes the following test administered in 2017–18:**

- Statewide Assessment: Science (grades 5, 8, 11)
- Extended Assessment (for eligible students with disabilities in grades 3-8, 11)
- English Language Proficiency Assessment - ELPA (K-12)

**REQUEST BASED ON DISABILITY**

- This request is to accommodate my student’s IDEA or Section 504 identified disability.**

In the area below, please address each of the following:

- Explain in your own words why you are requesting this exemption.
- Describe how your student’s IDEA or Section 504 identified disability interferes with his or her ability to participate in state tests.
- Explain why you believe there are no accommodations that would allow your student to participate.

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**REQUEST BASED ON  
RELIGIOUS BELIEFS**

- This request is to accommodate my student’s sincerely held religious beliefs.**

Please initial each statement:

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand that the purpose of the regulation’s exemption for religious beliefs is to accommodate families in circumstances when religious beliefs conflict with a state-required program, including statewide tests. Religion, while broadly interpreted, usually is a comprehensive set of beliefs that concern ultimate and fundamental ideas about life, purpose and death. The term “religious beliefs” means religious, moral or ethical beliefs as to what is right and wrong that are held with the strength of religious convictions. Merely wishing to avoid testing, or having political or social objections to testing not based on a religious belief, do not meet the requirements for the exemption.

\_\_\_\_\_ My student has religious beliefs against statewide assessments and I request an exemption from statewide tests for my student for the 2017–18 school year.

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<b>Please initial each statement:</b>	
	I have read this form and the Frequently Asked Questions on Opting Out of State Science Testing.
	I understand the consequences to my student and my school of opting my student out of statewide testing.
	I propose that my student be provided with an alternative activity during the testing period. I understand that, given the priority of test administration, the school will have limited staff available to supervise and facilitate alternate learning activities for students not participating in testing.

Comments or suggestions:

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\_\_\_\_\_ I affirm the truthfulness of the statements in this application.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date:

Submit this completed form before February 9, 2018 or 2 weeks before the test is administered, to:

Bethel School District Office  
4640 Barger  
Eugene, OR 97402

**FOR SCHOOL DISTRICT USE ONLY – PLEASE DO NOT WRITE BELOW THIS LINE**

Received by (Name): \_\_\_\_\_ Staff Initials: \_\_\_\_\_

Date received: \_\_\_\_\_

Approved  
 Denied

Response sent to parent on date: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Response sent to school on date: \_\_\_\_\_

Determining official's signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_