

Graduation in Washington

A guide for schools and families to help
ensure students earn their high school diplomas



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Graduation in Washington

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MATERIALS/HANDOUTS

Find the Graduation in Washington guide and all related materials online at:
<http://www.k12.wa.us/Resources>

ON THE WEB

Visit www.WAtesting.com for information on state testing and
www.k12.wa.us/GraduationRequirements for state graduation requirements

QUESTIONS?

For questions regarding graduation requirements and state testing,
contact gradreq@k12.wa.us or statetesting@k12.wa.us



2011-12 Key Dates

September 2011

- 9 Deadline to register for Oct. 1 SAT
- 10 First ACT testing of the school year
- 16 Deadline to register for Oct. 22 ACT

October 2011

- 1 First SAT testing of the school year
- 7 Deadline to register for Nov. 5 SAT
- 22 Second ACT testing of the school year
- 28 Testing window opens: Reading, Writing and Math WAAS-DAPE (through Nov. 9)
- Late** School districts receive scores from HSPE August 2011 testing

November 2011

- 4 Deadline to register for Dec. 10 SAT
- 5 Second SAT testing of school year
- 8 Deadline to register for Dec. 3 ACT
- 9 Testing window closes: Reading, Writing and Math WAAS-DAPE

December 2011

- 3 Third SAT testing of the school year
- 10 Third ACT testing of the school year
- 30 Deadline to register for Jan. 28, 2012 SAT

January 2012

- Early** Testing window opens: Math EOC Retakes (last 3 weeks of semester)
- 13 Deadline to register for Feb. 11 ACT
- 28 Fourth SAT testing of school year

February 2012

- Early** Deadline to submit Collection of Evidence
- 10 Deadline to register for March 10 SAT
- 11 Fourth ACT testing of the school year
- Mid** Testing Window Closes: Math EOC Retakes

March 2012

- 9 Deadline to register for April 14 ACT
- 10 Fifth SAT testing of the school year
- 13-14 Testing Window: Writing HSPE
- 15 Testing Window: Reading HSPE

April 2012

- 6 Deadline to register for May 5 SAT

April 2012 (cont.)

- 14 Fifth ACT Testing (Last opportunity to receive results before June graduation)
- 27 Testing window opens: Grades 3-8 Measurements of Student Progress (online and paper)
- Late** Results for Math EOCs and Collection of Evidence returned

May 2012

- Early** Testing window opens: Math and Science EOCs exams (must be given within last 3 weeks of school year)
- 5 Sixth SAT testing of the school year (Last opportunity to receive results before June graduation)
- 18 Testing window closes: Grades 3-8 Measurements of Student Progress (paper)
- 6 Deadline to register for June 4 SAT
- 4 Deadline to register for June 9 ACT
- 1-4 & 8-11 Testing window: Advanced Placement
- 31 Districts receive electronic results with met/not met results for all 12th-graders only who tested in spring (HSPE, HSPE-BASIC, WAAS-DAPE, WAAS-Portfolio)

June 2012

- Early** School districts receive individual student HSPE Score Reports
- Early** Deadline to submit Collection of Evidence
- 4 Testing window ends for grades 3-8 Measurements of Student Progress (online)
- 2 Final SAT testing of 2010-11 school year
- 9 Final ACT testing of 2010-11 school year
- Mid** Testing Window Closes: Math and Science EOCs
- Mid** Report to Families: OSPI's announcement of state-level HSPE results and progress with graduation requirement in reading and writing
- 1-24 Registration window for August HSPE

August 2012

- 14-16 Testing Window: August HSPE (reading and writing)
- 31 OSPI releases statewide Spring 2012 MSP/HSPE/EOC performance in all subjects and all grades. Second round of HSPE Score Reports for students in grades 10, 11 and 12. **NOTE:** *June Collection of Evidence results also returned*



State Graduation Requirements

A high school diploma is more than a rite of passage. It should signify to anyone — college admissions counselors and professors, employers and families — that a student worked hard, was challenged and is prepared for the next steps in life. To help ensure that, Washington’s graduation requirements were changed. Now, ALL public high school students, regardless of their ambitions after high school, are expected to show they have a solid foundation of skills and knowledge.

The state’s graduation requirements, as established by the State Board of Education, represent a portfolio of a student’s high school career. That portfolio, composed of four elements, is proof that the student has acquired the necessary skills to succeed both personally and professionally in an increasingly complex world.

State & Local Requirements

School districts may have additional graduation requirements, such as community service. Students and their families should be aware of all state and local graduation requirements when they begin high school.

Students are held to the graduation requirements that are in place when **they first enter ninth grade**. The requirements do not change even if the student’s graduation year changes.

The Four State Graduation Requirements

The state’s four high school graduation requirements began with the Class of 2008. New graduation requirements (a third credit of math and the requirement to pass a state math exam) begin with the Class of 2013. Students in the Class of 2013 and beyond must earn Certificate of Academic (or Individual) Achievement in order to be eligible to graduate.

Through the Class of 2012: Students must fulfill the four following requirements as outlined in state statute [WAC 180-51-061](#). The requirements under WAC 180-51-061 are for all students in the classes of 2008 and 2012.

Class of 2013 and Beyond: Students in the Class of 2013 and beyond must fulfill the four following requirements as outlined in state statute [WAC 180-51-066](#) and state law [RCW 28A.655.066](#).

I. Earn High School Credits

Through the Class of 2012: The state requires a minimum of **19 credits** to graduate, but school districts have the authority to require students to take and pass additional courses for graduation. According to a survey conducted by the State Board of Education in 2008, most school districts in the state require about 23 credits to graduate.

Class of 2013 and Beyond: Beginning with the Class of 2013, the state minimum requirement rises to **20 credits** with the addition of a third credit of high school math. See [WAC 180-51-066](#).



2. Complete a High School and Beyond Plan

To graduate, students must develop a plan on how they will meet the high school graduation requirements and what they will do following high school. A student's plan, which ideally should be started in eighth or ninth grade and be revised as he/she moves forward, should include the classes needed in preparation for a two- or four-year college, apprenticeship, career or technical school, certificate program or the workforce. Each school district determines the guidelines for the [high school and beyond plan](#). Questions about the guidelines should be directed to the high school or school district office. **Note:** This requirement does not change with the Class of 2013.

3. Complete a Culminating Project

To graduate, all students must complete a [culminating, or senior, project](#). Each school district determines the guidelines students must follow to complete this requirement. Questions about the culminating project guidelines should be directed to the high school or school district office. **Note:** This requirement does not change with the Class of 2013.

4. Pass State Tests OR State-Approved Alternatives

Beginning in the 2009-2010 school year, the high school Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL) was replaced by the High School Proficiency Exam (HSPE). If students through the Class of 2012 previously passed the WASL in a specific content area (e.g., reading), they are not required to pass the HSPE. Visit www.WAtesting.com for more information.

Students receiving special education services must pass state-approved special education in reading, writing and math alternate assessments. Download the handout "*How Students in Special Education Participate in State Testing*" at: www.k12.wa.us/Resources.

Students in the Class of 2013 are required to pass three state exams (reading, writing and math) and earn a Certificate of Academic Achievement, or Certificate of Individual Achievement for students in special education. Beginning with the Class of 2015, students must pass reading, writing, two end-of-course math exams and one science end-of-course exam to earn a CAA or CIA.

READING and WRITING

Through the Class of 2012: Students can meet the reading and writing graduation requirement by:

- Passing the reading and writing high school WASL/HSPE OR
- Passing a state-approved alternative, also known as CAA Option (**see Page 7**)

Class of 2013 and beyond: Students can meet reading and writing graduation requirement by:

- Passing the reading and writing high school HSPE OR
- Passing a state-approved alternative, also known as CAA Option (**see Page 7**)



MATH

Through the Class of 2012: Students can meet the math graduation requirement by:

- Passing the math high school WASL/HSPE or **one** of two end-of-course exams OR
- Submitting a score of 19 or higher on the math ACT, 470 or higher on the math SAT, or 3 or higher on calculus or statistics Advanced Placement course exams OR
- Submitting a GPA comparison (this is not considered a math assessment, and students must still take a legislatively approved math assessment) OR
- Earning two credits of math after the 10th grade

A student must take the math WASL/HSPE at least once before using any of the above alternatives. The math collection of evidence is not an option for students through the class of 2012. (**See Page 7**)

Class of 2013 and 2014: Students can meet the math graduation requirement by:

- Passing **one** math end-of-course exam (algebra I or geometry), or their integrated math equivalents OR
- Submitting scores on the math ACT or math SAT (to be determined by summer 2012), or 3 or higher on calculus or statistics Advanced Placement course exams OR
- Submitting a GPA comparison (this is not considered a math assessment, and students must still take a legislatively approved math assessment) OR
- Submitting a successful math Collection of Evidence

Class of 2015 and beyond: Students can meet the math graduation requirement by:

- Passing **two** math end-of-course exams (algebra I and geometry), or their integrated math equivalents OR
- Submitting scores on the math ACT or math SAT (to be determined by summer 2012), or 3 or higher on calculus or statistics Advanced Placement course exams OR
- Submitting a GPA comparison (this is not considered a math assessment, and students must still take a legislatively approved math assessment) OR
- Submitting a successful math Collection of Evidence

Note: The option of earning two credits of math after the 10th grade is no longer available for students in the Class of 2013 and beyond because it is not a CAA Option.

SCIENCE

Through the Class of 2014: Passing a state science exam (WASL/HSPE/EOC) is not required for high school graduation.

Class of 2015 and beyond: Beginning with the Class of 2015, students must pass a biology end-of-course exam, which debuts in spring 2012.

For more information: Visit www.k12.wa.us/GraduationRequirements



Alternatives to Passing State Exams: Certificate of Academic Achievement Options

Students who have the skills and knowledge but can't demonstrate those skills on state tests can use the CAA Options, or state-approved alternatives, to meet graduation requirements in reading, writing and math.

Note: Students must have a valid score on the WASL/HSPE/math EOC before attempting any of the following alternatives:

Collection of Evidence (COE)

There are new eligibility requirements for the collection of evidence beginning in the 2011-12 school year. Visit <http://www.k12.wa.us/assessment/CAAoptions/CollectionofEvidence.aspx> for specific rules.

- **Through the Class of 2012:** Students compile a set of classroom work samples in reading or writing with the help of teachers. Samples must meet state guidelines and state panel review, and demonstrate proficiency in that topic comparable to the proficiency tested on the HSPE. Scores are released 60 days after submittal deadlines. (Seniors who submit in June will not receive their diploma in June.)
- **Class of 2013 and 2014:** Students compile a set of classroom work samples in reading, writing and math with the help of teachers. The math COE will be available for students in the class of 2013 beginning in 2012-13. **Note:** The science COE will debut beginning with the Class of 2015.

GPA Comparison (12th graders only)

- Students in 12th grade must have an overall GPA of 3.2 or higher. A student's grades in math courses and/or English courses are compared with the grades of students who took the same courses AND passed the HSPE. This option is not considered an assessment. **Note:** Science is added to this alternative beginning with the Class of 2013.

College-Entrance Exams/AP Classes

- **Passing scores on one or more of the national tests:** Minimum acceptable scores are:

Reading	SAT: 350	ACT: 13
Writing	SAT: 380	ACT: 15
Math	SAT: 470	ACT: 19

- **A score of 3 or higher on Advanced Placement tests:** Those tests are:

Reading	English literature and composition, macroeconomics, microeconomics, psychology, U.S. history, world history, U.S. government and politics, comparative government and politics
Writing	English language and composition
Math	Calculus or statistics



Students **through the Class of 2012** may use the WASL/HSPE or any alternative to meet graduation requirements for each content area – reading, writing and math – to earn their Certificate of Academic Achievement and their high school diploma. Example: A student can use a successful WASL/HSPE in reading, a successful Collection of Evidence in writing and an AP test in math. **Note:** Students in the Class of 2013 and beyond must earn their CAA to graduate in reading, writing and math. Science is added to the requirement for the Class of 2015.

Transfer students: A student who transfers into Washington public high schools in 11th or 12th grade from out of state or an in-state non-public setting (home school or private school) has immediate access to the CAA Options and does not have to take our state exams. If a student has already passed an approved exam in their previous state, he/she can use those results. To learn more, visit: <http://www.k12.wa.us/assessment/WaiverAppeals/TransferWaiver.aspx>.

2012 State Testing Information

Test Booklets

The state will automatically send Pre-Identification HSPE test booklets to school districts for every 11th- and 12th-grader who has yet to pass a reading and writing state exam. School districts or families do not need to order booklets or register these students. As in years past, test booklets are sent for every 10th-grader. Any student from 7th grade through 12th grade will receive a math end-of-course test booklet if they are taking algebra I and/or geometry, or integrated math equivalents.

Math and the Class of 2012

Students in the Class of 2012 are the last to be able to earn two credits of math after 10th grade instead of passing a state math exam. They must have taken the math WASL/HSPE/EOC once before accessing this option. A student cannot be eligible to graduate without having attempted the math WASL/HSPE/EOC. Please see the math graduation requirements on Page 5 for further clarification or “[Meeting the Math Graduation Requirement](#)” handout.

State Testing Days

All students statewide must take the high school reading and writing HSPEs on the same days. Students who miss, for example, the reading HSPE will not be able to make up any of the testing they missed. The next HSPE testing opportunity following spring 2012 is Aug. 14-16, 2011. School districts set the schedules for end-of-course testing in math in January/February and math and science in May/June.



Release of Spring 2012 Testing Results for 12th-graders

OSPI will have all spring assessment results for 12th-graders available before graduation ceremonies. The following chart indicates when **electronic results** will be sent to District Assessment Coordinators (DACs). Paper score reports for all students in all grades who tested in April will be sent to school districts in early June. To ensure that results for 12th-graders are returned on time, districts will be required to separate those assessments that need immediate scores from those that can follow the regular return timeline.

	Date Taken/Date Submitted	Results Returned (12 th -graders only)
Collection of Evidence	Early February	Late April (Note: Results for all students will be returned)
End-of-Course Math	January/February	Late April (electronic Pass/Fail information to districts)
High School Proficiency Exam	March/April	May 31 (electronic Pass/Fail information to districts)
Developmentally Appropriate Proficiency Exam (WAAS-DAPE)	March/April	May 31 (electronic Pass/Fail information to districts)
WAAS-Portfolio	March	May 31 (electronic Pass/Fail information to districts)

2012 High School Testing

Spring 2012 HSPE testing for students in 10th, 11th or 12th grade is scheduled for March 13-14 (writing) and March 15 (reading). End-of-course math will be administered in January/February of 2012 and within the last three weeks of school. The biology EOC will be given at the end of the school year, within the last three weeks of school. School districts can accommodate non-enrolled 12th graders by using overage or unused booklets.

August 2012 High School Proficiency Exam

August 2012 state testing is for students who have finished 10th, 11th or 12th grade. It is scheduled for August 14-16. The HSPE and HSPE-Basic will be offered in August. The registration window for August testing will be held June 1-24. Students must have an SSID to register.

Online registration: www.k12.wa.us/testregistration **Phone registration:** 866-400-9275

Monday, Aug. 14: Writing (Expository)

Tuesday, Aug. 15: Writing (Persuasive)

Wednesday, Aug. 16: Reading



Testing for Students in Special Education

Students in special education have an Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), which guide how the student will participate in state testing. For specific questions, please contact your local school. For general questions, please e-mail waas@k12.wa.us or visit www.k12.wa.us/assessment/altassess.aspx. You can also download, “*How Students in Special Education Participate in State Testing*” at <http://www.k12.wa.us/Resources/pubdocs/SpecialEdTesting.pdf>.

Washington Alternate Assessment System (WAAS) Portfolio

Students who submitted a Washington Alternate Assessment System Portfolio (WAAS-Portfolio) in the spring or who were unable to submit a portfolio in the spring will have an opportunity to submit a portfolio in November.

Locally Determined Assessments (LDA)

Twelfth-graders receiving special education services now have another way to meet the graduation requirement. The Locally Determined Assessment (LDA) System helps those students for whom the WASL/HSPE, the HSPE-Basic (passing is set at Level 2) or the Developmentally Appropriate Proficiency Exam (DAPE) are not appropriate tools to assess their skills, but neither is the Washington Alternate Assessment System (WAAS) Portfolio. These students need modified achievement standards. Students who are likely in this group read and comprehend adapted or below-grade level text, master a limited number of grade-level or below grade-level concepts and skills, and communicate orally and/or in writing.

To use an LDA to meet the graduation requirement, a student must:

- Be in grade 12
- Have an Individualized Education Program (IEP) for reading, writing and/or math
- Use one of three approved educational achievement tests
- Be on track with or have finished all other state and local graduation requirements (e.g., credits, culminating project, high school and beyond plan, etc.); **AND**
- Have a score on an approved standardized assessment and generated a Grade Equivalent (GE) score at or above 3.8. The score must have been obtained in either the 11th or 12th grade.

Note: Students with a Section 504 Plan are not eligible to use an LDA.

For more information on the LDA, visit: <http://www.k12.wa.us/assessment/altassess.aspx>



Waivers for Students With the Most Severe Cognitive Disabilities

Districts may make local decisions about the appropriateness of course credits, high school and beyond plans, and senior culminating projects for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. State laws and rules ([RCW 28A.155.045](#) and [WAC 180-51-115](#)) also acknowledge the critical role of the IEP team in determining the most appropriate high school assessments for students with disabilities. However, at this time, there is no mechanism by which districts may waive the reading, writing, and math assessment requirements for high school graduation.

OSPI has established a process and criteria for waiving the assessment requirements for students whose cognitive functioning is the most severely impaired. These are students who function at an “awareness level” of cognitive development. This level of cognitive development is extremely rare. Students at the awareness level exhibit the following:

- The student has limited intentionality and is **not** able to communicate using pre-symbolic strategies
- The student’s reaction to environmental stimuli may be limited to crying, opening eyes, movement, etc.
- The student’s behavior is not under his or her control but reflects a general physical state (e.g., hungry, wet, sleepy).
- The student may be conscious (awake) during limited times each day.
- Parents, teachers, or other adults are needed to interpret the child’s state from behaviors such as sounds, body movements, and facial expressions.

Please see OSPI Bulletin 015-08 at <http://www.k12.wa.us/BulletinsMemos/bulletins2008.aspx> for complete information.

Kevin’s Law and Graduation

Kevin’s law ([RCW 28A.155.170](#)), approved in 2007 by the Legislature, allows certain students receiving special education services to participate in high school graduation ceremonies with their peers. The law requires each school district that operates a high school to establish a policy and procedure to determine which students receiving special education services can participate in graduation ceremonies after four years, even if they plan to remain in school for several more years. Students allowed to participate under district policy will receive a certificate of attendance during graduation ceremonies and then, if earned, a diploma when they have completed their schooling.



Waivers, Appeals and Graduation Ceremonies

Special, Unavoidable Circumstance Appeals

Students in 12th grade who have been unable to demonstrate their skills and knowledge on the HSPE/EOC or another assessment because of special, unavoidable circumstances may appeal to a High School Certificate Review Board. The board will review and decide on all appeals in May 2011.

This appeals process is for students who have the skills, but who have not had an opportunity to show those skills because of special, unavoidable circumstances. Those who have had access to testing are not eligible to apply for this appeal.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Visit: <http://www.k12.wa.us/assessment/WaiverAppeals/SpecialCircumstances.aspx>

11th and 12th Grade Transfer Students

Students who transfer into a public school in their 11th or 12th grade year have the opportunity to qualify for graduation without taking a state exam.

Depending on the transfer student's situation, there are two possible alternatives:

1. A student who transfers from another state in the 11th or 12th grade may apply to receive a waiver of the [assessment graduation requirement](#) if the student has previously passed another state's high school exam. The waiver does not grant the student a Certificate of Academic Achievement (CAA).
2. A student who transfers into a public school in the 11th or 12th grade from out of state or from an in-state non-public school setting (private or home school) is eligible for direct access to the [CAA Options](#) without taking a state exam first. A student who submits a waiver application also automatically has direct access to the CAA Options.

Graduation Ceremonies

School districts, by their own school board policy, determine who participates in graduation ceremonies. The state has no authority over such ceremonies. Most school districts only allow students to participate if they have fulfilled all graduation requirements. However, some districts do make exceptions. Families should consult with their specific school district about their graduation ceremony policy.



Options for Students not Graduating After Four Years of High School

Students who have not met their high school graduation requirements AND have not earned a regular high school diploma are eligible for a free public education through the school year in which they turn 21 years of age. This includes students under 21 who have earned a GED certificate or are enrolled in:

- Career and technical education programs including skills centers;
- Transitional bilingual instruction programs;
- Special education programs; or
- Migrant education programs.

High schools and school districts continue to receive Basic Education Allocation (BEA) and any other funding that these students generate.

Students who are not graduating after four years of high school also have paid options available if they choose not to return to high school. Those options are detailed following the free options.

FREE OPTIONS

Free options are available for students who are NOT graduating after four years of high school and want to meet their high school graduation requirements. The options are:

1. **Continued Enrollment in High School:** All students are eligible to attend their resident high school through the school year in which they turn 21.
2. **Enrollment in a School District High School Completion Program:** School districts may contract with community colleges to offer tuition-free high school completion programs to students still enrolled in their resident school district. Upon completion of program, students would receive a high school diploma from that district.
3. **Continued Running Start:** Students who participated in Running Start during their 11th and 12th grade years but didn't complete the classes required for high school graduation may continue their Running Start participation to meet high school graduation requirements beyond 12th grade, but only to take those classes through Running Start that they failed or did not complete successfully. (The Running Start program allows eligible 11th and 12th grade students to take college classes tuition free and accrue both high school and college credit for those classes.)

Continued on Page 14 ...



Continued from Page 13 ...

PAID OPTIONS

Paid options are available for students who are NOT graduating after four years of high school and want to meet their high school graduation requirements. The options are:

1. **Enroll in a Community and Technical College High School Completion Program:** A number of community colleges in the state offer high school completion programs providing students with a high school diploma from the college. Students must drop out of their resident high school to enroll in these programs. In most cases students are charged tuition and fees for enrollment, although the colleges have the authority to waive tuition and fees for students 19 and older. Students 16 to 18 years of age must have a signed release from their resident school district in order to enroll in a community college high school completion program.
2. **Pursue a General Education Development (GED) Certificate:** Students 16 and older may earn a GED certificate by passing all in a series of tests offered through a GED program. In order to take the tests, students must have dropped out or been withdrawn from their resident high school. State community and technical colleges are the official testing centers for the GED. Students pay fees for the tests and may have to pay tuition and fees for GED preparation courses offered through community and technical colleges. The certificate is not equivalent to a high school diploma, and students who earn a GED certificate are considered dropouts for high school accountability purposes. However, students who are under 21 years of age and who have a GED certificate can still fulfill their high school graduation requirements and get their diploma. (See Free options No. 1 and 2 above.)
3. **Enroll in a Public Two- or Four-Year College or University:** None of the public colleges and universities in Washington requires that students have a high school diploma in order to be admitted, although a high school diploma significantly increases the chances of admission to the state's four-year institutions. Students without high school diplomas who enroll in colleges and universities pay full tuition and fees like all other students. Students who do not have a high school diploma or GED certificate may not be eligible for certain federal, state and private financial aid.



Handouts Available Online

- [Earning a Diploma: State Graduation Requirements](#)**
 Graduation requirements for all high school students. Translated into nine languages. School districts can send home with HSPE/EOC Score Reports at the beginning of the 2011-12 school year or in June 2012.
- [Graduation Requirements Checklist](#)**
 A worksheet by graduating class to ensure state and local graduation requirements have been met. Also, an FAQ on how to meet the requirements.
- [Overview of Certificate of Academic Achievement Options](#)**
 The CAA Options and how students access them.
- [Meeting the Math Graduation Requirement](#)**
 All that entails meeting the state's math graduation requirement.
- [Math Graduation Requirement FAQs \(through the class of 2012\)](#)**
 Learn more about changes made to the math assessment graduation requirement (through the class of 2012) and what those changes mean for schools and students. This document will be updated regularly to answer questions as they arise in schools and districts.
- [State Testing 2012](#)**
 Overview the state testing system, including the Measurements of Student Progress (MSP) and High School Proficiency Exam (HSPE) and end-of-course (EOC) exams.
- [Options for Students not Graduating After Four Years of High School](#)**
 All the options and supports available to students to continue their education until a diploma is earned.
- [Parent/Guardian Access to their Child's State Test Booklets and How to File a Score Appeal](#)**
 How parents/guardians can request their child's test booklet, what to expect after submitting a request and when a score appeal can be filed.
- [How Students in Special Education Participate in State Testing](#)**
 State testing options available to students in special education.

MATERIALS/HANDOUTS

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