

## **Parental Exclusion FAQ**

### **What are parental exclusions?**

Utah Code 53A-15-1403 permits parents, or students over the age of 18, to request to be excused from tests administered statewide. This includes the Student Assessment of Growth and Excellence (SAGE) summative exams, as well as many others.

### **Which tests can a parent exclude their students from taking?**

According to Utah Code 53A-15-1403(9), parents may exempt students from any assessment that is mandated by the federal government or the state of Utah or that requires the use of a state assessment system or software paid for the state. Each year, the State Board of Education publishes a list of all qualifying assessments.

### **Can parents exclude their students from any testing mandated by the district, school, or teacher?**

Utah Code 53A-15-1403 only applies to state and federally mandated assessments. District, school, or teacher mandated assessments do not qualify.

### **Where can I find a parental exclusion form?**

The State Board publishes a parental exclusion form each year, which includes all qualifying assessments for that year and is available at <http://schools.utah.gov/assessment/Home/2016ParentalExclusionForm.aspx>. Many districts and charters publish their own parental exclusion forms as well.

### **Can I submit a parental exclusion form directly to the state?**

No. Parental exclusion forms should be submitted directly to the school, district, or charter.

### **Can a parent choose which tests to exclude for their students?**

Yes. The parental exclusion form should include a list of assessments, and the parent may choose any or all of them for exclusion.

### **How long is a parental exclusion form valid?**

A submitted parental exclusion form is only valid for the year it is submitted. If the parent or guardian wishes to exclude their student the following school year, then a new form will need to be submitted?

### **If a student is enrolled in more than one district or charter school, can a parent only submit a parental exclusion form to one of them?**

A parental exclusion form is only valid in the district or charter school it is submitted in. If a student is enrolled in more than one district or charter, the parent will need to submit a separate form to each of them.

**If a student has already started taking an assessment, can a parent still submit a parental exclusion form?**

A parent may submit a form before, during, or after a student has started testing; however, in order to guarantee that a student does not see any of the assessment, the parent will need to submit the form at least 24 hours before the student is scheduled to test. If the student has already started or has completed the assessment, the district or charter will invalidate the test results.

**Can a teacher reward a student for taking a state-mandated test? Can a teacher punish a student for a parental exclusion?**

Utah Code 53A-15-1403 indicates that teachers may not reward or punish a student for being excluded from testing. Schools are required to provide an alternative learning experience for the student while the rest of the class takes the assessment.

**If a parent excludes a student from the state-mandated civics exam, can the student still graduate?**

No. Since the civics exam is a graduation requirement, the student must complete it in order to graduate.

**How many students are excluded from SAGE testing each year?**

A small but growing number of students are excluded each year from SAGE testing. In 2015, roughly 4% of all expected tests were excluded, and in 2016 the ratio was 5%. In general, charter schools have higher exclusion rates than districts, though the percentage varies greatly from school to school.

USBE publishes a report each year showing the percentage of excluded tests in each district and charter.

2014-15 report: <http://www.schools.utah.gov/assessment/SAGE/Resources/2014ParentalExclusionReport.aspx>

2015-16 report: <http://www.schools.utah.gov/assessment/SAGE/Resources/2015ParentalExclusionReport.aspx>

**How are parental exclusions counted in school accountability?**

State-level accountability (such as school grades) does not include parental exclusions in the school's participation rate. Federal-level accountability does not recognize parental exclusions, and so these students are considered nonparticipants and count against the school's participation rate.

**Please contact the USBE Assessment Office if you have other questions (801) 538-7600.**