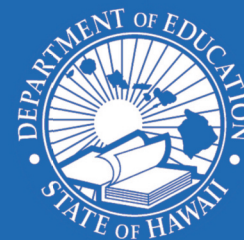


Student testing



FAQs

How are assessments used? Two ways...

INSTRUCTION: To measure how students are progressing toward college and career readiness in core subjects:

- English Language Arts/Literacy (Smarter Balanced, or SBA)
- Mathematics (SBA)
- Science (Hawaii State Assessment, or HSA)

Annual testing provides not only a regular means to see if students are meeting higher expectations at a single point in time, but also measures student growth over time.

Results from assessments help to focus instruction on key skills that students need to master in order to become college and career ready. Schools need tests to help determine if students (individually and in groups) have learned what was expected of them, and identify areas of difficulty to make targeted adjustments in instruction.

Hawai'i also provides assessments for:

- Kaiapuni (immersion) school students (Hawaiian language assessment of state standards in language arts and mathematics, grades 3 and 4, and science grade 4)
- students with cognitive disabilities (alternative assessments)
- special education students (accommodations on the SBA and HSA)
- English Learners (WIDA language proficiency assessments)

ACCOUNTABILITY: A reliable and objective assessment of student achievement helps to address the desire by elected officials, community members and parents to know whether students are achieving in their schools. It also allows for meaningful comparisons across schools, provides a yardstick for holding schools accountable for improved academic achievement, and informs educational policy, school improvement and instructional practice.

HELPFUL LINKS

- Detailed information on assessments: bit.ly/HIDOE-testing
- Factsheet: Terms & Meanings: bit.ly/HIDOEterms
- Information about Smarter Balanced: bit.ly/SBAHI
- FAQs about ESSA: bit.ly/HIDOE-ESSAfaqs

Why are there so many assessments?

Federal law requires them. Hawaii administers the minimum number required by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

The Hawaii State Department of Education performs a review of all assessments each year and listens to concerns from the field, including teachers and administrators. State testing requirements were reduced starting with school year 2015-16. Tests that are now optional include End of Course exams in Algebra I, Algebra II and U.S. History, and the grade 11 ACT. ACT Aspire tests for grades 8-10 have been eliminated.

In addition, starting with school year 2017-18, parts of the SBA have been changed in order to reduce the time to complete the assessments. The test has been streamlined to include only the Computer Adaptive Test (English Language Arts and Mathematics) and the Writing Performance Task, and test questions that took a long average time to complete were eliminated.

What about ESSA?

ESSA is the reauthorization of federal education law, signed in December 2015. It continues a requirement for annual statewide assessments to measure student achievement, and specifies that not less than 95% of students participate in these assessments. Hawaii does not have an opt-out policy and expects all students enrolled to participate in the required assessments.

Required statewide assessments

	CONTENT AREA	GRADES	TESTING TIME	WHY
SBA Smarter Balanced Assessments	English Language Arts/Literacy Mathematics	3-8 and 11	Untimed. Changes to the 2017-18 tests should reduce average time to 5.5 hours	SBA gauges student progress toward college/career readiness in Common Core subjects. Used for coursework placement in nearly 200 colleges, including UH.
HSA-Science Hawaii State Assessments in Science	Science	4 and 8	1.5 hours	Measures students' mastery of content and skills in state science standards.
	Biology I (End of Course Exam)	High school	1.5 hours	
NAEP National Assessment of Educational Progress	Reading Mathematics	4 and 8 <i>Only a sample of students take the exam.</i>	1.5 hours	Given in odd-numbered years by the U.S. Department of Education to measure student achievement at a national and state level, over time.