

Middle School Testing Frequently Asked Questions
February 1, 2017

Florida law requires SCPS and all SCPS students to participate in the statewide, standardized assessment program. Specifically, Section 1008.22(3), F.S., states, "Participation in the assessment program is mandatory for all school districts and all students attending public schools, including adult students seeking a standard high school diploma under s.1003.4282 and students in Department of Juvenile Justice education programs, except as otherwise provided by law..." SCPS will fully comply with Florida law. The following information is provided in response to SCPS parent questions posed to SCPS about the assessment program and the administration of the assessments in Seminole County schools.

The information reflected in this FAQ is current as of the publication date. This document will be edited as needed to reflect updates from the Florida Department of Education and changes to Florida statutes.

State Required Assessments – Florida Standards Assessments (FSA), and Statewide Science Assessment

1. What are Florida Standards Assessments?

The Florida Standards Assessments (FSA) are designed to provide parents and families, administrators, teachers, policy makers, and the general public with information regarding how well students are learning the Florida required curriculum standards associated with tested grade levels and courses.

2. What is the Statewide Science Assessment?

The FCAT Science has been renamed the Statewide Science Assessment. This assessment measures 8th grade student achievement of the *Next Generation Sunshine State Standards* in Science. Though the name of the assessment changed, there was no change in the content and it remains a paper/pencil test.

3. Who participates in the Florida Standards Assessments and Statewide Science Assessment? Are these tests administered on computer or paper/pencil? How long is each test?

All districts are required to teach the Florida Standards and per Florida Statute 1008.22, all districts are required to participate in state testing. Therefore all students enrolled in Seminole County Public schools participate in testing.

For each state required assessment, the tables below detail the grade level of student participants, the state provided testing window, the length of each testing session, the number of testing sessions required for each test, and the test delivery method (CBT - computer based or PBT - paper/ pencil based). The Writing section of the FSA is administered separately from the Language Arts portion and consists of one writing topic for student response. A student's results on the Writing section and the Language Arts section will be combined into one score.

Middle School Testing Frequently Asked Questions

FSA Writing

Grade(s)	Dates	Session Length	Number of Sessions	Delivery
6	2/28-3/3	120 minutes	1	PBT
7	2/28-3/3	120 minutes	1	PBT
8	2/28-3/10	120 minutes	1	CBT

FSA ELA – Reading

Grade(s)	Dates	Session Length	Number of Sessions	Delivery
6	4/10-5/12	85 minutes	2	CBT
7	4/10-5/12	85 minutes	2	CBT
8	4/10-5/12	85 minutes	2	CBT

***All sessions administered over two days.**

FSA Mathematics

Grade(s)	Dates	Session Length	Number of Sessions	Delivery
6	4/10-5/12	60 minutes	3	CBT
7	4/10-5/12	60 minutes	3	CBT
8	4/10-5/12	60 minutes	3	CBT

***All sessions administered over two days. For Grades 6-8, Session 1 is on Day 1, Sessions 2 & 3 on Day 2.**

Statewide Science Assessment

Grade(s)	Dates	Session Length	Number of Sessions	Delivery
8	5/1-5/5	80 minutes	2	PBT

***Assessments administered in a single day.**

4. How are students prepared to take a computer based FSA?

Prior to administering each computer-based assessment, test administrators conduct a practice test that contains sample test items to prepare students for the item types, tools, and online interface they will encounter during testing. Practice tests allow students to interact with tools available on the assessment as well as content based question types. Practice tests are approximately 20 questions with an average of 2 reading passages. Schools have been provided options for presenting practice tests in a way that will minimally impact instructional time. Parents are encouraged to visit the Students and Families section of the Florida Standards Assessment information portal to access additional test preparation materials. www.fsassessments.org

5. What type of questions are included in the FSA?

The Florida Standards Assessments (FSA) are composed of test items that include traditional multiple-choice items, items that require students to type or write a response, and technology-enhanced items (TEI). Technology-enhanced items are computer-delivered items that require students to interact with test content to select, construct, and/or support their answers. These question types assess students' ability to think and problem solve at a high academic level in alignment with the expectations of the Florida Standards.

6. How can students and parents prepare for the FSA and Statewide Science Assessment?

Students and parents can best prepare for the FSA and Statewide Science Assessment by ensuring students are in class each and every day. Overall, students are working and studying very hard, asking questions in class and completing assignments. Parents are encouraged to stay involved in their child's education by working with teachers and reviewing relevant websites and resources. It is important for all of us, parents, teachers, and staff, to encourage students to try their best, but to remember not to over-emphasize the assessments and create stress, fear, or frustration.

7. On what specific days will the state required tests be administered?

The testing windows for each of the state mandated assessments are presented in the charts above. For your student's specific testing days within these windows, please contact your student's school. To access the District 2016-17 Statewide Assessment Calendar for the specific dates of the state required assessments. On the SCPS main web page www.scps.k12.fl.us.

8. How will SCPS use state required assessment data for student placement in academic support and intervention programs?

For the 2016-17 school year, students were placed in academic support and intervention programs based on a review of a variety of individual student data points. The data points included, but were not limited to, teacher-made or teacher-selected classroom assessments, student course grades, school-based instructional technology program results, a review of prior year state required test scores, progress monitoring assessments and other relevant state-approved assessment results. Students who demonstrated a need for intervention or intensive programs based on multiple sources of data are being provided additional support. Seminole County Public Schools will utilize this process for the 2017-18 year unless there are legislative or Florida Department of Education (FDOE) rule changes.

9. Do the FSA and Statewide Science Assessment count toward students' grades in their courses?

The FSA–ELA, FSA-Math and Statewide Science Assessment tests do not count toward a student's course grade.

10. Are exceptional education students who are enrolled in Access curriculum courses required to take the FSA, and/or the Statewide Science Assessment?

No, these students will take the Florida Standards Alternative Assessment instead of the FSA and/or the Statewide Science Assessment.

11. Are English Language Learner students required to take the FSA and/or the Statewide Science Assessment?

Yes, these students will take the FSA and the Statewide Science Assessment and may utilize all appropriate accommodations.

12. Do the results of the FSA and Statewide Science Assessment count for school grades?

Yes, the results of these assessments are included in the school grade calculation process. English Language Learner students who have less than two full years of instruction in the United States at the time of testing are not included in the calculation of school grades.

13. Are the results of the FSA used to calculate a portion of a teacher's evaluation?

Yes, the student data portion of a teacher's evaluation counts as 34% of the overall teacher evaluation.

14. Is it possible for students to miss the same amount of questions on the FSA and yet receive different scores?

Items on the FSA exams, as well as many standardized assessments, vary in item difficulty and cognitive complexity and are weighted differently. All questions are not worth the same value. Different test forms are utilized in the administration and are reviewed and compared by state psychometricians to ensure that the level of difficulty is the same for each test form.

15. How are technology-enhanced item types, including free response items, graded on FSA exams?

Technology-Enhanced Item Type questions, including free responses, are graded by the computer. The state testing vendor consults with content area experts in developing possible answer choices and methods that a student may utilize to determine the right answer.

16. Are partial points awarded for technology-enhanced item types or multi-part questions?

Partial points are not awarded on the FSA.

State Required Assessments – End of Course (EOC) Exam

17. What are End of Course exams?

Florida Statute 1008.22 (b) details the statewide, standardized assessments that are required for specified courses. Seminole County Public Schools (SCPS) refers to these Florida Department of Education mandated assessments as EOCs. EOC exams measure student mastery of the curriculum standards for specific courses.

18. Who participates in End of Course exams?

Students enrolled in middle school Civics, high school Algebra 1, Geometry, and Biology 1 are required to participate in state required EOCs.

Assessment	Course	Standards
Algebra 1	Algebra 1 - 1200310	Florida Standards
	Algebra 1 Honors - 1200320	Florida Standards
Geometry	Geometry - 1206310	Florida Standards
	Geometry Honors - 1206320	Florida Standards
Biology 1	Biology - 2000310	Next Gen Sunshine State Standards
	Biology Hon - 2000320	Next Gen Sunshine State Standards
	Biology Pre-IB - 2000800	Next Gen Sunshine State Standards
Middle School Civics	M/J Civics - 2106010	Next Gen Sunshine State Standards
	M/J Civics - 2106015	Next Gen Sunshine State Standards
	M/J Civics - 2106020	Next Gen Sunshine State Standards

19. How are EOCs administered and how long is each test?

For each state required EOC assessment, the table below details the grade level of student participants, the state provided testing window, the length of each testing session, the number of testing sessions required for each test, and the test delivery method (CBT - computer based or PBT - paper/ pencil based).

Middle School Testing Frequently Asked Questions

FSA EOCs

Subjects	Dates	Session Length	Number of Sessions	Delivery
Algebra 1	4/17-5/12	90 minutes	2	CBT
Geometry	4/17-5/12	90 minutes	2	CBT

***All sessions administered over two days.**

NGSSS EOCs

Subjects	Dates	Session Length	Number of Sessions	Delivery
Biology	4/17-5/19	80 minutes	2	CBT
Civics	4/17-5/19	80 minutes	2	CBT

***Assessments administered in a single day.**

20. How do End of Course exams impact student grades?

As required by Florida Statute 1003.4156(1), all EOCs will count as 30% of the grade earned in the course. At the end of each semester the student is issued a tentative semester grade. Once the EOC results are received from the Florida Department of Education, a letter grade is assigned to the student based upon the student's score on the test. This letter grade is entered into the student's course records and the student's grades for semester one and semester two are recalculated. The student's grade point average is then updated and credit in high school courses is awarded.

21. How are the letter grades earned on the End of Course exams determined?

Each district determines the letter grades associated with an EOC score. The SCPS process is based on analyzing the percentage of students who earned letter grades of "A" through "F" in the EOC course. The letter grade cut points for the EOC exam score are then set to mirror these percentages. For example, if 20% of students district-wide earned an "A" in the EOC course, then approximately 20% of the top scores on the exam would be given an "A" grade and so on. Then to ensure validity of these cut points, teachers who teach EOC courses are gathered to review the letter grade cut points and provide feedback.

22. Does a student have to pass the End of Course exam to earn credit in the course?

Credit in an EOC associated course is determined by the grade earned in the course, not by passing the test. The finalized semester course grade consists of the student grades earned through completion of course assignments (70%) and the EOC result (30%). If a student earns an “F” for the EOC portion of the grade but the finalized semester grade is a “D” or higher, then the student has passed the course and credit will be awarded in high school courses.

23. Does a student have to pass the End of Course exams in order to graduate?

A student must pass the statewide, standardized Algebra 1 EOC assessment, or earn a comparative score, in order to earn a standard high school diploma. (Section 1003.4282(3), F.S.). The Algebra 1 EOC is the only EOC students are required to pass in order to graduate.

Current middle school students who wish to earn a standard diploma with a Scholar’s Designation must also earn a Level 3 or above on the high school EOCs for Geometry, Algebra 2, Biology 1 and US History. Students and parents should contact their school guidance department for more information.

24. Does a middle school student have to pass the Civics End of Course exam in order to be promoted?

Earning a Level 3 or above on the Civics EOC is not required in order for a student to be promoted to the next grade level.

25. What if a student is absent for the EOC?

Absent students will be scheduled into the next available make up session within the testing window. If the student does not make up the EOC within the current test administration window, then the student will be scheduled to take the EOC during the next available administration. Parents should contact the school for details on the available EOC make up sessions.

26. Are exceptional education students who are enrolled in Access curriculum courses required to take EOCs?

No, these students will take the Florida Standards Alternative Assessment instead of EOCs.

27. Are English Language Learner students required to take EOCs?

Yes, these students will take EOCs and may utilize all appropriate accommodations.

28. Are End of Course exams used to calculate teacher evaluations and school grades?

Results from the EOCs will be used to calculate a portion of teacher evaluations and will be used by the Department of Education in the school grade calculation process.

If you have additional questions regarding state required testing, please contact the Florida Department of Education.

Common Nine Week Exams

29. How are teachers monitoring student progress?

Seminole County Public schools is committed to providing students rigorous, high quality instruction aligned to Florida curriculum standards. Teachers utilize these curriculum standards and district developed instructional plans to construct their daily lessons for students. Within the instructional plans, there are activities and assessments aligned to the curriculum standards that teachers present to their students. These activities and assessments that are embedded in the teachers’ classroom instruction allow students and parents to gain insight into the student’s progress. Teachers utilize the outcome of these activities and assessments to guide instructional decisions and provide insight into each student’s progress toward mastering the curriculum standards taught during the grading period. By using the results from these classroom embedded activities and assessments to monitor student progress, disruptions to instructional time have been reduced.

30. What are Common Nine Week Exams? Who participates in these assessments?

Common Nine Week Exams are a part of the instructional plans and designed to provide parents, teachers and students with information regarding the progress students are making toward mastering the curriculum standards. The content of these assessments is aligned to the grade level instructional plans that teachers use to plan daily instruction for your student. Assessment questions were written and selected by Seminole County Public School teachers, instructional coaches and district curriculum specialists. Common Nine Week Exams ensure teachers, parents and students will have valuable information that reflects your student’s progress towards mastering learning. The table below details the grade level of student participants, the subjects tested, the number of testing sessions required for each test and the test delivery method.

Common Nine Weeks Exams

Grades	Subjects Tested	Number of Sessions	Delivery
6-8	English Language Arts	1	Computer or Paper (School Choice)
6-8	Math/Algebra 1/Geometry		
6-8	Science/Biology		
6-8	Social Studies/Civics		

31. How will the Common Nine Week Exams be administered?

These assessments contain 20-25 multiple choice questions and can be administered via computer or paper/pencil in a single class period. The method of administration will be a school decision based upon available resources at the school.

32. When will the Common Nine Week Exams be administered?

Common Nine Week Exams will be given near the end of each nine week grading period for Quarter 1, Quarter 2 and Quarter 3.

A Quarter 4 Nine Week Exam will be given in these courses. For the 4th Quarter, schools have the option of developing a Quarter 4 Nine Week Exam at the school level with input from multiple teachers who teach the same subject or developing tests independently by individual teachers. These Quarter 4 Nine Week Exams can be performance based assessments such as projects and presentations. The type of assessment is at the discretion of the teachers based on the direction provided by the principal. Schools also have the option of administering the Quarter 4 Common Nine Week Exams. Please contact your student's teachers of these subjects for more information on the Quarter 4 Nine Week Exams.

Each school establishes its own testing schedule for Common Nine Week Exams and the Quarter 4 Nine Week Exams.

33. Can teachers add additional test items to the Common Nine Week Exams?

Teachers have the option of adding additional test items for student response as part of the Common Nine Week Exam administration process. These items can include but are not limited to additional multiple choice questions, performance based tasks, presentations and/or projects. The student score on these added items will be combined with the score earned on the Common Nine Week Exam when determining the student's final score. Please contact your student's teachers for more information.

34. How will the results of the Common Nine Week Assessments be used?

The results of these exams will provide teachers, parents and students insight into the progress each student is making toward mastering curriculum standards. Progress monitoring exams allow teachers to gather timely information to inform their daily instructional planning and support of your student. Student results on these assessments will be shared with parents and students.

The results of these exams will count as 10% of the nine week grade earned in the course.

The results of these exams will not be used in the calculation of teacher evaluations or in the calculation of the school's grade.

35. How will student grades on Common Nine Week Exams be determined?

The teacher determines the grade associated with the students' scores on the Common Nine Week Exams to include, if applicable, any test items added by the teacher. Curving or adjusting the scores on the exam is at the discretion of the teacher based upon his/her professional judgement. The score as determined by the teacher will be entered into the teacher's Skyward gradebook and will be calculated as 10% of the overall nine week grade in the course.

Middle School Testing Frequently Asked Questions

36. Will students with IEP, 504, or ELL Plans be allowed accommodations while taking the Common Nine Week Exams?

Yes, students participating in these exams will be provided accommodations in accordance with the student's Individual Education Plan, 504 or ELL Plan. Exceptional education students enrolled in Access curriculum based courses will NOT participate in Common Nine Week Exams.

37. What is EdInsight?

EdInsight is the computer platform and data system that houses the progress monitoring assessment items developed by district teachers, instructional coaches and staff. Students who are accessing the Common Nine Week Exams via computer will take the exam within the EdInsight testing platform. Students who are taking the exams via paper/pencil will have their test results uploaded to the EdInsight platform. The EdInsight platform scores each assessment and provides teachers with reports that reflect student scores and responses by curriculum standard and/or test item. Teachers will utilize these reports to gain insight into student progress on mastery of curriculum standards.

38. Who should I contact if I have additional questions related to the Common Nine Week Exams?

The first point of contact is the school principal.