

Every Student Succeeds Act (S. 1177) Less Testing = More Learning



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Not only does the Every Student Succeeds Act take steps to reduce the amount of standardized testing, it decouples testing and high-stakes decision making—a major improvement over No Child Left Behind’s one-size-fits-all approach to accountability and the U.S. Department of Education’s criteria for granting waivers to the law.

KEY PROVISIONS

- ▶ Eliminates **Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)**, the impossible one size fits all goal driving No Child Left Behind’s failed accountability system
- ▶ Incorporates the SMART Act to provide funding for states to **audit and streamline** assessments, and eliminate those that are **unnecessary or duplicative**
- ▶ Creates a state pilot program (in seven states initially, then could be available to all) for **local assessments** driven by teaching and learning, not accountability alone, that could be used in place of the state’s standardized tests
- ▶ Requires school districts to inform parents and guardians of **opt-out policies**, and allows them to have their children opt out of statewide standardized tests where state and local policies permit
- ▶ Allows states to **set a cap** limiting the amount of time students spend taking annual standardized tests
- ▶ Continues annual statewide standardized tests in **reading and math** in grades 3-8 and once in high schools, but districts could seek approval to use the SAT, ACT, another nationally recognized assessment, or Advanced Placement assessments to fulfill the high school requirement—a **potential reduction** in federally-required standardized testing