



September 1, 2018

Dear Parent/Guardian,

This letter is in regards to the Kindergarten Assessment, the Smarter Balanced Assessments, Extended Assessment (the alternative state assessment), and the ELPA21 (English Language Proficiency Assessment). I wanted to take a moment to provide some important information about state tests.

SOESD classrooms (STEPS, STEPS Plus, Family Solutions, and Kairos classrooms) will administer the Kindergarten Assessment within the first six weeks of school. Smarter Balanced assessments will be given between January 8 – June 7, 2019. Extended Assessments will be given between February 14 – April 25, 2019. ELPA21 will be administered January 8 – April 12, 2019.

We know that an end-of-the-year test cannot possibly tell us *everything* about your child's academic progress. However, the results do act as a snapshot of your child's strengths and areas for improvement and can be used as a way to ensure he or she is getting the supports he or she needs. Additionally, the tests help our efforts to equitably distribute resources and support student learning. When fewer students take the test, we are left with an incomplete and inaccurate picture of how our students are performing, and this limits our ability to address issues, better serve students, and continue to improve our educational system.

Should you wish to opt your child out of **English/Language Arts and/or Mathematics for the Smarter Balanced or the Extended Assessments**, please go to www.soesd.k12.or.us/parents and click on *ODE 2018-19 Notice for Statewide Tests* to access the form to complete and return to your student's teacher prior to each testing start date. (The opt out form will be available after October 1.)

In addition, if you wish to opt your child out of the **Kindergarten Assessment, Smarter Balanced Science and/or Social Studies, Extended Assessment Science, or the ELPA21**, please **submit a letter** to your child's teacher stating you wish to exempt your child from that specific test based on either disability or religion. The opt out form is not available in this instance.

In SOESD, we are deeply committed to ensuring each and every student in our schools has the supports he or she needs to achieve at high levels and graduate prepared for his or her next steps. Our ultimate goal is to make sure that all students are set up to be successful from grade to grade and that will remain the focus of our district throughout the rest of the school year.

If you have general questions or want more information about the Kindergarten Assessment, Smarter Balanced Assessments, Extended Assessments, or the ELPA21, I encourage you to reach out to your child's teacher(s) with any questions you may have. I am also available to answer any questions you may have at susan_peck@soesd.k12.or.us or at 541-776-8555.

Sincerely,

Susan Peck
Director, Special Education Services

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