



MORE TEACHING LESS TESTING ACT

SECTION-BY-SECTION

Sec 1. Short Title

Names the act the “*More Teaching Less Testing Act*”

Sec 2. Findings

This section outlines the body of research and sources that illustrate the harmful impact of the annual statewide summative assessments, in addition to research that debunks claims that standardized tests can measure student learning or growth or that test-based accountability can close achievement gaps. Our current practice of statewide summative assessments limits what is taught and how it is taught in the classroom in ways that prioritize rote memorization over critical thinking and problem solving skills. Teacher surveys also show that high-stakes standardized testing is a common reason cited for teachers leaving the classroom, which exacerbates the nationwide teacher shortage.

Sec. 3. Sense of Congress Relating to Appropriate Uses of Summative Assessment

This section conveys the sense of Congress that in order to support a love of learning that fosters joy, curiosity, creativity, rigor, collaborative problem solving, and 21st century skills, schools need more capacity and resources for meaningful educational experiences. State assessments and accountability systems should support critical thinking and student learning across a range of subjects and skills, but the current ESSA requirements limit classroom instruction, promote memorization, and are not conducive to balanced assessment systems using multiple measures. It further conveys that states should be supported in developing innovative assessment systems that meaningfully measure performance and do not rely on commercial assessment products. Areas for growth that are identified through balanced accountability systems should result in the allocation of both resources and capacity building opportunities, rather than punitive consequences.

Sec. 4. Decreasing Standardized Testing Frequency for Students in Grades 3 through 12

This section removes the federal mandate for annual summative assessments administered to every student every year in grades 3-8 under ESSA and instead empowers states to implement grade span testing (statewide summative assessment once in each grade span of 3-5, 6-9, or 10-12), representative sampling, or a combination of grade-span testing with either representative sampling or matrix sampling.

Sec. 5. Public Comment Period Regarding the Administration of Assessments

This section requires that States carry out a public comment period of at least 90 days to solicit input from a broad community of stakeholders on the annual cap for time allotted to preparing for and administering federally-mandated summative assessment in a school year.

Sec. 6. Establishing a Taskforce to Evaluation Practices and to Promote Quality Teaching

This section creates a Taskforce within the National Center for Education Research charged with identifying:

- the research-based impact of standardized testing on student wellness and learning,
- opportunities to better support states in developing and implementing performance-based assessment systems that center student learning over teaching to the test,
- potential metrics of educational quality and equity that do not rely on standardized assessments, including opportunity to learn data, and
- Barriers that prevent elementary and secondary schools for establishing innovative assessment systems

Sec. 7. Expansion of Innovative Assessment Demonstration Authority

This section amends and improves the Innovative Assessment Demonstration Authority. The section extends the demonstration period to give states more time to develop and implement innovative assessment systems and expands the number of states eligible to participate.

This section further amends comparability requirements, which have made it difficult for states to design and pilot new assessment systems that diverge from traditional multiple-choice end of year tests. This section replaces such comparability requirements with a requirement that the innovative assessment system is of equal or greater rigor than current assessment systems, thus maintaining equity guardrails while empowering states to design more meaningful and balanced assessment systems.

Authorizes \$500 million over 5 years to carry out the Innovative Assessment Demonstration Authority, which had previously been unfunded.

Sec. 8 Authorization of Appropriations

This section authorizes quadrupling Title I-Part A funding for ten years to \$66 billion annually

Sec. 9. Prohibition of funds

This section prohibits states receiving these federal funds from using state assessments as the sole or dominant factor for large-scale grade retention policies, teacher evaluations, or high school graduation decisions. States receiving funds from the ESEA are prohibited from establishing a rating system for K-8 schools and districts that are based on test scores exclusively. States receiving funds from the ESEA are prohibited from establishing a rating system for high schools and districts that are based on test scores and graduation rates exclusively.