

Executive Numbered Memo 011-2009-10—High School Grade for Federal Accountability

March 3, 2010

TO: Superintendents and Principals

RE: Change in high school accountability year from 10th to 11th grade

ODE is committed to working with districts and stakeholders on continuously improving our educational system to better meet the needs of schools, educators, and kids. Over the past few years, we have heard from districts and educational groups that requiring the state assessments in 10th grade was not in the best interest of students and that a move to the 11th grade would allow for more instructional time prior to testing.

Based on the recommendation of numerous educational partners (including the Confederation of Oregon School Administrators (COSA), the Assessment of Essential Skills Review Panel (AESRP), and the State Board of Education), ODE staff have requested and gained approval from the US Department of Education to move our high school grade of accountability from 10th grade to 11th grade. This change is designed to provide students with more opportunities to receive the full breadth of instruction that will be assessed, prior to being tested for accountability purposes.

Starting in the 2010-11 school year, federal high school accountability will be based on the number of students who pass state assessments by the end of their 11th grade year. High School students may still take state tests in 9th and 10th grade, but all 11th grade students who have not previously passed a state test must take that test at least once during their 11th grade year. Students who do not pass the tests in 11th grade may continue to take them in their 12th grade year. While these 12th grade results will not count for accountability purposes, they can still count toward fulfilling a student's Essential Skills requirements.

To keep the accountability systems aligned, this change will also be implemented for school and district report card ratings.

Please note that this change is simply the grade by which schools are accountable for state and federal accountability and does not impact the number of testing opportunities available to a student. This change impacts Math, Reading, Science, and Writing assessments.

Why the change?

This change is designed to provide students with more opportunities to receive the full breadth of instruction that is assessed at the high school level.

Why the change to 11th grade vs. 12th grade?

Ensuring that all students are tested in 11th grade provides time for remediation and focus on problem areas prior to graduation. This is particularly important now that students may use the Oregon Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (OAKS) to meet Essential Skills requirements. 11th grade students who fail to meet OAKS standards still have one more year to do so for graduation purposes. (OAKS is only one of a number of means available to students to demonstrate their Essential Skills.)

Click here to view the [related press release](#).