

Note from MDE:

Statewide assessments are a useful and valid tool that assist the MDE, the SBE, and the Mississippi Legislature in evaluating schools, school districts, and generally the progress that we are making in raising the level and quality of education across our state. Statewide testing is so important that it has actually been codified in state law (Mississippi Code §§ 37-16-1, et seq.). Mississippi law mandates that “basic skills tests shall be completed by each student” and “in the event of excused or unexcused absences, make-up tests shall be given.” (Mississippi Code § 37-16-3 (2)). Along with the MDE every school district in the state is required to “periodically assess student performance and achievement in each school.” (Mississippi Code § 37-16-5). In summary, student assessments are not an option, they are a requirement. However, parents do have the right to opt out of statewide assessments if they choose.

In such instances, school districts are not required to provide alternative activities on testing days for students whose parents do not want them to take scheduled tests.