FAQs for End-of-Course Math Exams

EOC Exams Begin in Spring 2011

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The Basics of the EOCs

What law mandates end-of-course math exams?
RCW 28A.655.066

When is the testing window for the math exams?
The exams must be administered within the last three weeks of the school year. The schedule for testing must be the same across a school district.

Are there four end-of-course exams (Algebra I, Integrated I, Geometry and Integrated II), or are algebra 1/integrated 1 and geometry/integrated 2 combined?
There are four separate end-of-course exams.

How long will each end-of-course exams take?
The exams will take approximately 2½ 50-minute class sessions, or about 125 minutes (a half of a class session to read the instructions and to prepare students, and two class sessions to take the exam).

When will results be available?
These are paper-and-pencil exams with open-ended items. The results will not be available until August for the 2011 administration, due to the requirement to set performance standards (passing, or cut scores) on these new tests in July/August. In subsequent administrations, the results will be available six to eight weeks after testing.

Will a summer retake EOC be available?
Not in 2011. Because the passing scores will not be established until August, it is not possible to build a form of the test for August. Beginning in 2012, retake opportunities for the EOCs will occur in January/February, to coincide with regular EOCs for block-scheduled classes.

Is there an immediate makeup opportunity if a student misses all or part of an end-of-course exam?
Because the response has implications for other EOCs that will follow, such as science, this question is still under consideration by the Assessment Division. A response will be provided well in advance of the spring 2011 administration.

Why does OSPI require the entire state to take reading, writing and science exams on the same day, but the end-of-course exams can be given on different days in each district?
The end-of-course math exams are administered, naturally, at the end of the course. However, districts around the state finish their school years at different times, some near Memorial Day, with others into the third week in June. Thus, the testing window was set to be determined by each district within the last three weeks of the school year. Were a statewide testing window to be established, many students would take the end-of-course test well before their courses ended, while others would take it right at the end of their courses. It was decided that addressing this fairness issue had a higher priority over the issue of item security.
Doesn’t a longer testing window pose a security risk?
Because the testing window must be the same within each district, test security risks with the EOCs are minimized. Other states with EOCs we have talked with have not experienced major security issues.

What end-of-course exam meets AYP?
OSPI is in discussion with the US Department of Education on this, and it is not yet concluded. It is hoped that the first-year math EOC (Algebra I/Integrated I) will be Washington’s 10th grade AYP exam. The plan approved for Washington’s AYP by the US Department of Education will almost certainly be similar to plans approved in other states.

What happens if a student passes the end-of-course exam but not the course?
A school district would need to set its own policy on that issue, but the student would still be subject to the State Board of Education requirement for earning credits in mathematics courses. Those requirements, which are in effect for the Class of 2013 can be found at: [http://apps.leg.wa.gov/wac/default.aspx?cite=180-51-066](http://apps.leg.wa.gov/wac/default.aspx?cite=180-51-066).

Students in the Class of 2011-12

If a current 10th grader (Class of 2012) did not pass the math HSPE, what exam can they take to meet the math graduation requirement?
Students in the Classes of 2011 and 2012 can meet the assessment graduation requirement by passing either the Algebra I/Integrated I EOC or Geometry/Integrated II EOC. They do not need to pass both EOC exams.

Why can’t students in the classes of 2011 and 2012 continue to take the math HSPE exam considering they were taught previous math learning standards?
State law requires that students be assessed with end-of-course exams in math beginning in spring 2011, and resources have not been allocated by the Legislature to continue development, printing, distribution, scoring, and reporting of the math HSPE beyond August 2010.

Are there any other changes to the math graduation requirements for students in the Classes of 2011 and 2012?
No. Students in these two classes can still meet the math graduation requirement by passing the math HSPE, a math EOC (beginning in spring 2011) or by earning two credits of math after 10th grade.

How will we know if our 12th graders have passed and are eligible to graduate if we are giving the exam at the end of the school year?
For students in the Classes of 2011-12, they can also access the state-approved alternatives, or earn two credits of math after 10th grade to meet the math graduation requirement.

Students in the Class of 2013 and Beyond

Does a student have to pass both math end-of-course exams to graduate?
If an 8th grader takes an end-of-course exam, does it count as one of their “opportunities” to take the exam?  
Yes.

If an 8th grader takes algebra 1, does he/she have to take the end-of-course exam for AYP?  
Yes. All students enrolled in an Algebra I, Integrated I, Geometry or Integrated II course that the district determines can be used to earn high school credit will be required to take the EOC for that course. Retakes will be available for students who do not pass the EOC.

If a student takes and passes an EOC in 8th or 9th grade, is that score banked until 10th grade?  
Yes.

Does an 8th grader who is taking algebra 1 have to take the 8th grade MSP in addition to the algebra 1 EOC?  
Yes. The MSP is the state’s 8th grade federal accountability test for No Child Left Behind.

What exam(s) do current 8th graders and 9th graders take if they've already completed Algebra I/Integrated I or Geometry/Integrated II? Do they take both EOCs in spring 2011 or a comprehensive exam based on both EOCs?  
Beginning with the Class of 2013, students must demonstrate proficiency on both the first year and second year of high school math. First-year math proficiency may be demonstrated via the Algebra I EOC, the Integrated I EOC, or the “Comprehensive-Part 1” tests. Second-year math proficiency may be demonstrated via the Geometry EOC, the Integrated II EOC, or the “Comprehensive-Part 2” tests. Students who have already passed their first (or second) year courses prior to spring 2011 will be able to take either (or both) parts of the comprehensive tests, as appropriate. The comprehensive tests will assess the content that is common to the traditional and integrated courses, but will be shorter than the EOCs.

If a 9th grader in the Class of 2014 is taking geometry/integrated 2 in the 2010-11 school year, do they take two end-of-course exams in spring 2011?  
The student would take either the Geometry EOC or the Integrated II EOC, as appropriate; and would take the Comprehensive-Part 1.

Can a student access the state-approved alternatives, such as the SAT, ACT or Collection of Evidence, after they've taken only one EOC?  
No. Students in the Class of 2013 and beyond must take both EOCs.

If a student in the Class of 2013 and beyond takes geometry as an 11th grader, that student would only have one retake opportunity before graduation. What options are available for such a student?  
The student will have retest opportunities both in January/February and in May/June. Unless the student is enrolled in an EOC course, the retests would be in the form of comprehensive tests. Additionally, that student could take any of the state-approved alternatives, such as the ACT or SAT. Beginning in the 2011-12 school year, students will be able to compile a math Collection of Evidence.

My district is on a trimester or block schedule. When can we administer the EOC exam?  
In the 2010-11 school year, students will take the comprehensive test(s) at the end of the school year. Beginning with the 2011-12 school year, students in a trimester or block schedule will be able to take the appropriate EOC in January/February.
Can students in the Class of 2013 and beyond also earn two credits of math after 10th grade in order to meet the math graduation requirement?
No. The additional math credit route is no longer an option for students in the Class of 2013 and beyond.

Math Collection of Evidence and Other Options

Will the math Collection of Evidence return?
Yes. The Legislature has approved the return of the math Collection of Evidence as an alternative when passing the math exams become a requirement for graduation. The math COE will return in the 2011-12 school year. In addition, a science Collection of Evidence will debut in the 2011-12 school year.

Will there be a Collection of Evidence for Algebra I and Geometry, or a combined COE?
This and other design considerations are still being determined.

Do students have to take both math end-of-course exams before they can access the math Collection of Evidence?
See above. Not yet determined.

What happens if a student passes the algebra end-of-course exam, but does not pass the geometry EOC? Can they compile a Collection of Evidence just for geometry?
See above. Not yet determined.

Will the option for students in the Class of 2013 and beyond to take two credits of math after 10th grade still exist?
No. Under state law, students must pass the math end-of-course exams or a state-approved alternative. The math credit option will no longer be available.

The law (RCW 28A.655.066) states there must be a comprehensive exam for the Classes of 2013 and 2014, but beginning with the Class of 2015, there will be just EOCs? Is that correct?
Yes, that’s how the current law reads. Because Year 1 and Year 2 mathematics content standards are distinct, and because the graduation requirements clearly indicate that proficiency in both is expected as a graduation requirement, we are making available two separate, but shorter tests that summarize the Year One standards and the Year Two standards. These are the Comprehensive-Part 1 and the Comprehensive-Part 2 exams. Those shorter summary tests will be available as retests through 2014. We will discuss with the state Legislature what retake opportunities will be available beyond 2014.

Students eligible for Special Education and the EOCs

How do students eligible for special education meet the math graduation requirement with the introduction of the end-of-course exams?
The assessments and competencies required of students with IEPs is governed by a combination of laws and regulations from the state Legislature, the State Board of Education and the US Department of Education.

OSPI staff in divisions of assessment and special education are working with State Board staff to provide clear and comprehensive guidelines that are consistent with these regulations. We will post those guidelines as soon as they are completed, and will communicate them to special education directors and district assessment coordinators.

Will the same alternate assessments (DAPE, HSPE-Basic, WAAS-Portfolio) still be available?
Yes, parallel opportunities will be developed.