Senate Bill 3: Limit on State Assessments

SCHOOL LAW NEWSLETTER

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Categories:
Publications

Introduced February 2, 2015, Senate Bill 3 limits the amount of time school districts, community schools, STEM schools, and college preparatory board schools spend on state and district-wide assessments and practice assessments.

Cumulative Time Testing

Beginning in 2015-2016, the bill requires schools to limit the cumulative amount of time spent on state and district-wide assessments to 2% of the school year. It would apply to assessment tests given to grades three through eight, end-of-course examinations for high school students, and any district-wide or school-wide assessments given to a specific area or grade. Additionally, it limits the total amount of time students take practice or diagnostic assessments to prepare for the state assessments to 1% of the school year.

Board Resolution

Senate Bill 3 allows a school district to exceed these time limits by adopting a resolution. There must be a public hearing held prior to adopting such a resolution.

Elimination of Certain Diagnostic Assessments

The bill removes the requirement that school districts administer diagnostic assessments in writing and mathematics to grades one through three. It does not, however, remove diagnostic assessments for kindergarten students or reading assessments for grades one through three.

Inapplicability

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These limitations do not apply to assessments given to students with disabilities. Additionally, the limitations do not apply to diagnostics for students who fail to pass the third-grade English language arts assessment or students who take additional assessments to identify a student as gifted. Finally, the limitations do not apply to substitute exams for end-of-course American history, American government, or science exams.

Third-Grade Reading Exemption for High-Performing Districts

The bill exempts high-performing districts that meet certain qualifications from several requirements of the third-grade reading guarantee, including teacher qualifications, mentoring under the Ohio Teacher Residency Program, and class size restrictions.

Alternative Framework for Teacher Evaluation

Senate Bill 3 changes the alternative framework for teacher evaluation as follows: 50% teacher performance measure, and 34% student academic growth measure. The remainder must be either one or a combination of the following: student surveys, teacher self-evaluations, peer review evaluations, student portfolios, and/or any other component determined appropriate by the District.

What You Need To Know

If the bill is passed, school districts should take note of the time limits provided by S.B. 3 for assessments and practice assessments, as well as the alternative framework for teacher evaluations. If your district is interested in exceeding these time limits, you should review the bill to understand the requirements that must be met. Your district should make sure your teacher evaluation framework complies with the new law.

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