

Parents Should Know: Your Child Deserves Better

What teachers believe

- The Foundation Skills Assessment (FSA) is not useful for students, their families, or teachers.
- Teachers use a wide variety of formal and informal methods to effectively assess student progress and to meet individual student needs.
- Ongoing classroom assessment helps teachers plan and adapt lessons and allows students to show what they are learning in many different ways.
- The FSA does not help the BC school system meet the learning needs of students.
- The FSA is not a reliable method of measuring an individual child's progress and was not designed for this purpose.
- Better models of provincial assessment with protections to ensure the ethical use of students' data are possible.

What the research says

- Effective classroom assessment provides the best support for student learning. Broad-based, large-scale testing may in fact be an obstacle to meaningful learning.
- Students focus on short-term goals: "What's on the test?" instead of deep and intentional learning in a subject area.
- Students may decide they are unable to succeed and give up, rather than engage in ongoing learning in a subject area.
- Teachers may spend more time "teaching to the test" instead of supporting students to develop a real understanding of the subject area or skill.

What you can do

- Parents can ask school principals to withdraw their children from the FSA tests, according to Ministry of Education and Child Care guidelines concerning exemptions. There is a withdrawal letter and form available at bctf.ca/fsa.
- Talk to teachers about the assessments they use to support learning.
- Join other parents in a conversation about the impacts of the FSA testing.



Sometimes, the most brilliant and intelligent minds do not shine in standardized tests because they do not have standardized minds.

—Diane Ravitch, Education Historian and Education Policy Analyst
