Implementation of Exam Exemption

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POLICY REFERENCES: II, IIA, and IIAAA

Anna Martin, JTECHS

POLICY REFERENCES

Policy II (Standardized Testing Program):

This policy explains how standardized tests are used to measure student learning and improve instruction while following Mississippi state law. It strictly prohibits cheating, sharing test materials, or interfering with test results, with legal penalties for violations. Transfer students may be required to take placement tests, while certain transfers and special circumstances are exempt. Students with disabilities must be included in testing programs with appropriate accommodations or alternate assessments when needed.

Policy IIA (Testing and Student Surveys):

This policy explains how schools may use student surveys to better understand student needs and improve programs, while protecting student privacy. Surveys must be approved in advance, cannot identify individual students, and require parental consent if they involve sensitive topics. Parents have the right to review survey materials, opt their child out of certain activities, and be informed annually about these rights. The policy also limits the collection and use of student personal information and restricts invasive physical exams.

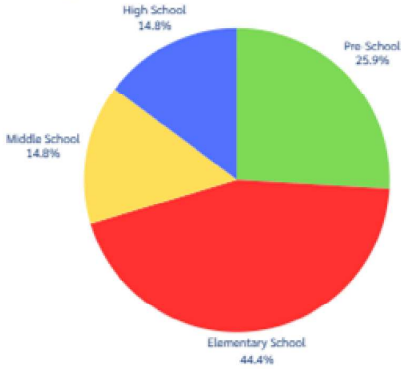
Policy IIAAA (Opting out of State Testing):

This policy explains that state testing is required by Mississippi law and is not optional for school districts. While parents may refuse testing for their child, the district must still follow state requirements by documenting refusals and ensuring testing is not disrupted. Students who opt out are not guaranteed alternative activities during testing days. The goal is to maintain a safe, orderly environment while meeting legal obligations.

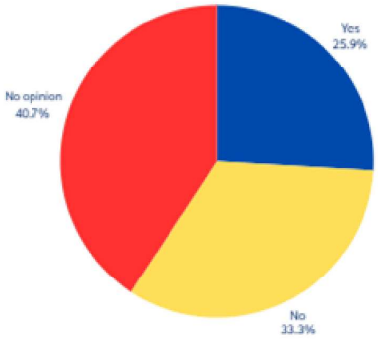
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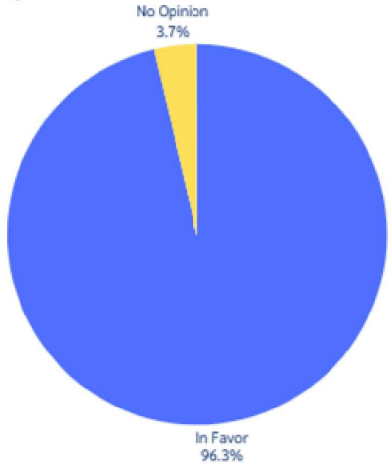
QUESTION 1:



QUESTION 2:



QUESTION 3:



PROPOSED QUESTIONS:

- QUESTION 1: When did you enter the JPS School District?
- QUESTION 2: Do you feel the JPS school district is transparent with testing results and their purpose?
- Would you be opposed or in favor of Exam Exemption only if you have the necessary GPA, attendance requirements, etc.?

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CONTINUED...

-Do you feel the JPS School District tests its students too much or not enough? Why, or why not?

-As a student, do you believe Exam Exemption would serve as a benefit or hinderance to the JPS School District? Why?

STUDENT FEEDBACK

"I believe Exam Exemption would serve as a benefit to the JPS School District as it will keeps students motivated. If we know we can get out of 3 hour (etc) testing by keeping our grades, attendance, and potentially behavior levels up/ right, school environments would be better. It can negatively impact district test scores though if only students who aren't doing well in classes are forced to take the tests."-JTECHS Scholar

"I feel that JPS tests students too much because when I had not yet finished taking all of my state exams I remember feeling exhausted of testing by the time the actual state test came around. I feel that Exam Exemption would benefit students who clearly do not need as much help or practice with upcoming exams because in my experience continuing to test students who don't need the extra practice only exhausts them when its time for the actual test."-JTECHS Scholar

"As a student, I feel that standardized testing can be extremely overwhelming. I personally feel that there should be in-class testing on paper for benchmarks and one big final exam at the end of the semester like they do in college to release the pressure off of students. My ninth grade year was so stressful because I was a horrible test taker when it came to math. I was always stressed out and worried when state tests rolled around because my teacher vehemently spoke about getting a PL 4 or higher. It freaked me out. I personally believe that reducing state testing and benchmarks to quizzes and exams to relieve scholars of excessive worry and stress."-JTECHS Scholar

"The JPS School District tests its students too much, not allotting enough class learning time, and centering classroom time, activities, and assignments to align with testing skills, rather than learning and retaining the information. While I believe there should be a method to formulate the passing of one grade to another, I do not believe standardized tests are necessary, as they focus more on how well you test, rather than what you have learned and obtained from classes. As a student, I believe Exam Exemption would serve as a benefit to the JPS School District, as class attendance and performance is a more efficient method to formulate the passing of one grade to another." -JTECHS Scholar

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EXEMPTION FROM FINAL EXAMINATIONS

Students meeting the following conditions will be eligible for exemption from final examinations:

- All graduating seniors with an 80 average or above in a subject for the year may be exempt from the final examination in that subject.
- Students in the ninth through eleventh grades with an 90 average or above in a subject for the year may be exempt from the final examination in that subject.

Students in the ninth through twelfth grades with missing work are ineligible for exemption from taking exams. Students shall not be informed of their exemption status until the day prior to the exam beginning. Students are expected to attend class on review days.

While the JPS Student Handbook includes a procedure for exam exemptions, it is limited and focused mainly on process. The Board should consider adopting a formal policy specifically for non-MAPP, non-standardized, etc. assessments. A clear policy would outline the expectations for eligibility, ensure consistency across schools, give students and families a better understanding of the requirements, and provide administrators with guidance when making decisions. A board-approved policy would also establish fair and consistent practices across the district, ensuring all students are treated equitably.

Brandon High School
(Rankin County School District)

For all secondary school students, exemption from the cumulative exam administered at the end of a cour is an earned privilege. A student will only be considered for exemption if the student has no office or disciplinary referrals in a teacher's class, or referral from an administrator, and meets the following requirements regarding absences and grades:

Semester-long Courses:

Attendance	Semester Average
0-1 absences	70 and above
2 absences	80 and above
3 absences	90 and above

Year-long Courses:

Attendance	Year-long Average
0-1 absences	70 and above
2-3 absences	80 and above
4-5 absences	90 and above

Students who are eligible for exemption will have the option to take an exam if they feel it will improve the grade.

All absences will be counted except those that are school related such as athletic, band, choir contests or school-based club trips. It is the student's responsibility to provide documentation of any school related absence. Students who receive an out-of-school suspension at any time during the year will NOT b exempt from any exam.

For the purpose of exam exemption, three (3) tardies = 1 absence

Students with missing work are ineligible for exemption from taking exams.

Students shall not be informed of their exemption status until the day prior to the exam schedule beginnir Students are expected to attend class on review days.



Clarkdale High School
(Lauderdale County School District)

Exam Exemption Policy

Any student who has perfect attendance in any 9 weeks period will have five (5) points added to the nine weeks test grade. A student WILL NOT receive perfect attendance if he/she is not in class for 63% of the scheduled class time.

Any student in a year-long course who has an "A" yearly average or perfect attendance for the entire year may be exempt from the fourth 9 weeks test. Any student in a one-semester course who has an "A" for the 9 weeks average or perfect attendance may be exempt from the last 9 weeks test for that course. The perfect attendance bonus will not be given to students who are exempt from the second or fourth 9 weeks tests because of grades.

Oxford High School
(Oxford School District)

Oxford High School Science Exemption Table

Foundations to Biology	Biology I/Pre AP Biology	Physical Science	Chemistry
Current year benchmark assessment OR 8th grade science state test	Current year benchmark assessment OR 8th grade science state test	College Prep science benchmark subscore OR ACT science subscore OR ACT WorkKeys subscore	College Prep science benchmark subscore OR ACT science subscore OR ACT WorkKeys subscore

Oxford High School History Exemption Table

World History/Pre AP World History	US History
Current year benchmark assessment	Current year benchmark assessment

Oxford High School Math Exemption Table

Foundations to Algebra	Algebra I	Geometry	Algebra II	SREB Math/Essentials for Math
8th grade state assessment OR Current year benchmark assessment	Prior year state assessment OR Current year benchmark assessment	Alg I state assessment OR College Prep math benchmark subscore OR ACT math subscore	Alg I state assessment OR College Prep math benchmark subscore OR ACT math subscore	ACT math subscore OR ACT WorkKeys subscore

The ACT College Readiness Benchmarks are the ACT scores that represent the level of achievement required for students to have a 50% chance of obtaining a B or higher or about a 75-80% chance of obtaining a C or higher in corresponding credit-bearing courses. These are also the scores that Mississippi Department of Education considers when determining our district College and Career Readiness metric.

ACT Test	Course Eligible for Exemption	Benchmark
English	English III, English IV, SREB Literacy, Essentials for Literacy	18
Mathematics	Geometry, Algebra II, Advanced Math Plus, SREB MathEssentials for Math	22
Reading	Government, Economics	22
Science	Physical Science, Chemistry	23
ACT WorkKeys	English III & IV, SREB Literacy,Essentials for Literacy, SREB Math, Essentials for Math, Physical Science, Chemistry, Economics, Government	Silver, Gold, or Platinum



Madison County School District

Exam Exemption- Middle nd High School

Exemption from exams will be granted (per requirements below) at the end of the first semester for seniors only, who are enrolled in one-semester courses. **Students eligible for exemption from a test will have the option to take an exam if they feel it will improve their grade.**

For all middle and high school students (grades 6-12), exemption from the second semester cumulative exam which is administered in May is an earned privilege. A student will be considered for exemption if the student meets the following attendance, behavior and grade requirements.

Semester Courses		Year-long Courses	
No more than	Semester Average	No more than	Final Average
1 absence	70-79	2 absences	70-79
2 absences	80-89	4 absences	80-89
3 absences	90-100	6 absences	90-100

Students who receive an out-of-school suspension or multiple office referrals at any time during the year will NOT be exempt from any exam. Students who owe fees or fines will NOT be exempt from any exam.

Positives

- Rewards students who consistently work hard and stay engaged all semester
- Encourages better attendance and personal responsibility
- Reduces stress for students who are already performing well
- Keeps classrooms focused and motivated throughout the year
- May save resources like computers, desks, pencils, and paper on test days

Negatives

- Could feel unfair for students who barely miss the exemption requirements
- Requires careful tracking of grades, attendance, and eligibility
- May reduce opportunities for students to practice test-taking skills
- Needs clear, consistent rules to ensure every school applies it the same way

Aligns with JPS JOY

Exam exemptions fit with the JPS JOY framework by recognizing students' hard work, supporting their well being, and making sure the rules are fair for everyone.

- **Celebrate Students:** Gives students extra credit for their effort and achievements and shows that their hard work is noticed and appreciated.
- **Reduce Stress:** Helps students who have already shown they understand the material avoid unnecessary pressure.
- **Keep it Fair:** Clear rules make sure all students are treated the same across different schools.
- **Encourage Learning:** Motivates students to stay engaged, take chances in their learning, and try new things.
- **Build Community:** Strengthens trust between students and teachers and helps make schools feel supportive and positive.

By recognizing achievement and supporting students, exam exemptions help create the kind of joyful and encouraging environment that JPS JOY is all about.

Recommended Policy Implementation

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The Jackson Public School District should **change this procedure to an exam exemption policy** to recognize and reward students who demonstrate consistent academic excellence and responsibility.

Eligibility would be based on:

-GPA

-Course Grades

-Attendance

-And, where appropriate, a qualifying ACT subscore.

-State-mandated assessments and select standardized tests would remain required, because they are essential to measure student progress. Select local exams, however, should be optional for students who meet the criteria, as these exams often retest material students have already mastered.

-By exempting students from final exams, the **time spent on memorizing facts can instead be used to build real-life skills** such as critical thinking, problem solving, communication, and leadership. Exams often test short-term recall, but applying knowledge in meaningful ways better prepares students for college, careers, and life beyond the classroom.

-This **policy would also save valuable school resources,** including computers, desks, pencils, and paper, which could be reinvested in instruction, student programs, and technology. With clear, consistent eligibility criteria, the policy would ensure fairness and transparency across all schools in the district.

-In short, **an exam exemption policy is motivating and forward-thinking**. It celebrates achievement, supports student well-being, prioritizes real-world learning, and aligns perfectly with JPS Joy.