

Law allows for opt outs of standardized tests

If school districts don't meet 95 percent participation rates, they could stand to lose federal money

By Emily Mentzer and Jolene Guzman
The Itemizer-Observer

SALEM — The landscape of statewide assessments — currently Smarter Balanced Assessments — is in question after Gov. Kate Brown signed a law allowing parents to more easily opt children out.

The law is not without controversy, as roughly \$140 million in federal funding statewide is dependent on at least 95 percent of students participating in the standardized tests.

Last year, only about 10 students were excused from the tests in Central School District, said Buzz Brazeau, superintendent.



Brazeau

Whether or not the new law will affect participation rates next year is difficult to say.

"It's hard for me to tell," he said. "I would hope (we don't get more opting out), but I think it depends on how well people are informed."

For some, including Central Education Association president and CHS English teacher Ben Gorman, the

new law is a win for educators and parents.

"My guess is that, when parents realize that the test data isn't actually used to help their individual student, many will decide any activity in which their child learns something is preferable to an unnecessary test," Gorman said.

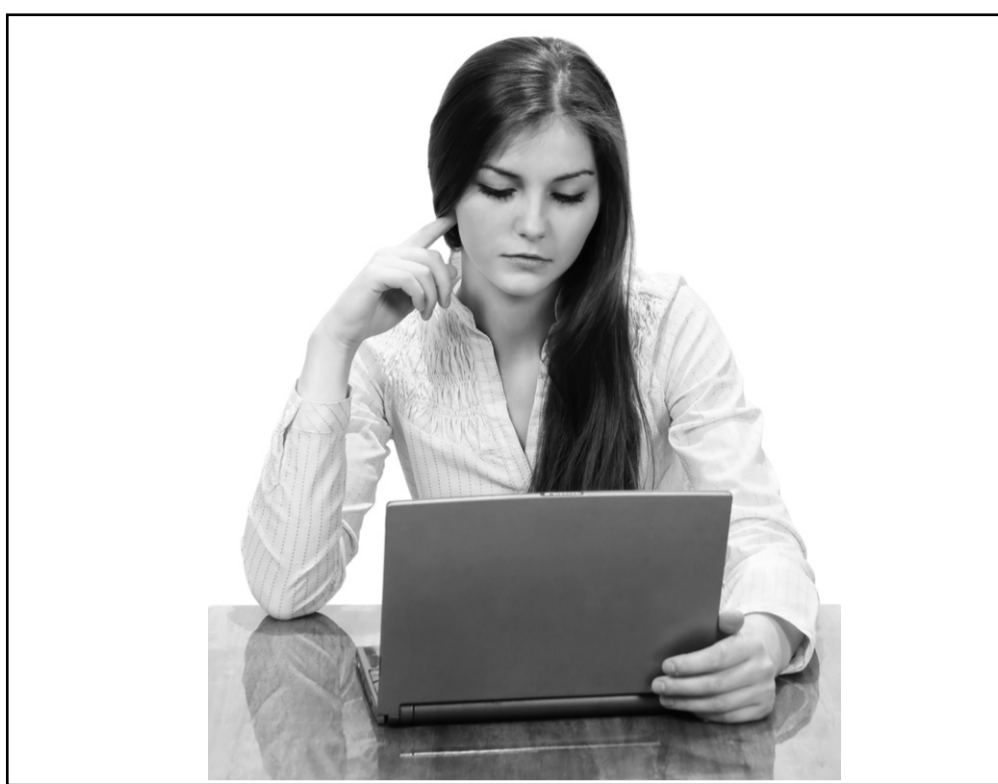
Kimber Townsend is a mother of two Central students, one was a junior last year and the other attended Talmadge Middle School. She opted both of her children out of Smarter Balanced last year, calling it a family decision.

A couple factors contributed to that decision.

"I work in the College of Education at Western Oregon University," she said. "I hear conversations about standardized testing from faculty, the dean and administration. How do we feel about it, how will this affect our students (at WOU). Standardized testing goes against every best practice that we teach our student teachers."

Standardized tests are developed by people who make tests, not by educators, Townsend said.

"With more and more blended classrooms, all learning levels and skill levels in the same room, standardized testing doesn't work," she said.



A new state law makes it easier for parents to opt children out of standardized tests.

"They're not standardized students."

Perhaps a bigger motive behind opting out her students was because of the missed classroom time.

"When my student says to me, these are challenging classes, what happens if I miss four days — they actually pull them (students) out and coach them how to pass," Townsend said. "Four days of testing, plus prep time."

Brazeau said Smarter Balanced took roughly 11,500 hours of testing time last year.

Gorman said the time spent testing gets in the way of teaching.

"We have to give up significant instructional time to testing every year," he said. "Combine that with one of the shortest school years in the country, and Oregon's kids get almost a full year less instruction (over the

course of 12 years) than students from most states."

Michelle Johnstone, Dallas School District's new superintendent, said she agrees that students spend too much time taking state assessments.

"The thing that worries me is how much time it takes," she said, adding it's counterintuitive to requirements schools increase time students spend in the classroom.

That's especially true when the results aren't provided to the districts in a timely manner, she said.



Johnstone

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"Kids have to be measured somehow," she said. "Now, do we have to do it excessively? No."

Previous to Dallas, Johnstone was a superintendent in Colorado, where the Legislature also allowed for more opt outs.

The federal government put the state on notice that it could lose funding if too many students weren't tested.

She's worried the same thing will happen in Oregon.

"It makes me a little nervous to say parents can opt out for any reason," she said, adding:

"It puts districts in a really bad spot."

The threat of losing funding should enough parents in Oregon opt out of the testing is real, but it may not stay that way.

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POLK COUNTY WORSHIP DIRECTORY

DALLAS

Calvary Chapel Dallas www.calvarydallas.com
Currently meeting for worship and verse by verse Bible teaching at 628 SE Jefferson St. Worship service begins at 10 a.m. on Sunday. Sunday school is available from youth ministry and below to nursery. Wednesday evening cafe-style Old Testament study starting at 6:30 p.m. Come join us for a relaxed study around a cup of coffee or drink. Mens prayer is Saturday at 7:30 a.m. Womens Bible studies are scheduled also, call for times. The Pastor/Teacher is Larry King. Come join us and be a part of God's family here in Dallas. For more information call 503-831-1074.

Church of God of Prophecy New Beginnings - 575 SW Ash St., (corner of Ash & Stump St.) Pastor Raul Lopez, 971-209-0452. Bible Study School 10:00 a.m. Morning Worship 11:00 a.m. (bi-lingual) Bible Study 6:00 p.m. presently studying the book of Ezekiel. We welcome all. Associate Pastor Jim Dickason 503-302-9816.

Church of Christ - North Kings Valley Hwy. Sunday Class 9:30 a.m. Worship Service 10:30 a.m. Sunday Evening Service 5:30 p.m. Thursday Evening Bible Study 7:00 p.m. We are a Bible Based Church. Visitors welcome. For information call 503-420-4010. If no answer, please leave a message and we'll return your call as soon as possible.

Dallas Alliance Church - 775 E. Ellendale, Dallas, 503-623-2265, Email office@dallasalliance.org, Lead Pastor Jim Jamieson; and Youth/Children's Pastor Lance Baker; Every Sunday: classes for all ages at 9:15 a.m., Morning Worship at 10:30 a.m., (Nursery provided for a.m. services); Tuesdays: Youth Night 7:00 p.m. in Ediger Hall; Wednesdays: Adult Prayer Meeting 1:00 p.m., Choir practice 6:45 p.m. Call for info on current Bible Studies. Web: dallasalliance.org.

Dallas Church - PO Box 462, Dallas, OR 97338, 503-623-2711. Worship Gatherings: Sundays 10am. Meeting at 450 SE Washington St., Dallas OR 97338. Atmosphere is relaxed, families & children welcome, come as you are, current music & relevant teaching about Jesus. Pastor: Ben Bauman. www.dallaschurch.org

Dallas Foursquare Church - Located at 976 SW Hayter St. on the corner of Washington and Hayter. Worship Service: Sundays at 10am. Youth Group: Sundays 6pm to 8pm. Pastor: Darrin Hausler. We are a multi-generational church with a heart for our community. Our mission is to Love God and Love People to Extend His Kingdom. For more info call us at 503-623-8277 or visit us online at dallasfour.com.

Evangelical Bible Church - 1175 S.E. Howe, Dallas 503-623-2331. Senior Pastor Jerry Franz, Visitation Pastor Allan Wiebe, Youth Pastor Nathan Ens. Sunday: Worship *8:00 a.m.; *10:45 a.m.; *6:00 p.m.; Sunday School 9:30 a.m.; High School Youth Group 7:00 p.m.; Thursday: Jr. High Youth Group - 7:00 p.m.; 2nd & 4th Tuesday: MOPS *9:00 a.m.; Wednesday: AWANA - 6:30 p.m.; Prayer Meeting & Bible Study 7:00 p.m.; Thursday: Bible Studies *9:00 a.m. & *7:00 p.m. (women); Thursday Group Bible Study 2:00 p.m. *Nursery care provided.

Faith Evangelical Free Church - 2290 E. Ellendale Ave., Dallas, 503-623-8034; Senior Pastor Al Perkins, Associate Pastor Ed Sutter, Worship Pastor Ted Kitzmiller, Youth Pastor Aaron Swank, Ministry of Children & Family Debbie Davies. Sunday School 9:00 a.m.; Sunday Worship 10:30 a.m., Sunday High School Youth Group 6:30 p.m.; Wednesday Jr. High Youth Group 7:00 p.m. Please call or visit our website for information about other meetings. www.faithfreechurch.org

First Baptist Church - 245 S.W. Church St., Dallas, 503-623-5189; www.gofbc.org; Church Office Hours: Mon - Fri. 12 - 4 pm; Pastor Rick

Bratton; Sunday School 9:30 a.m., Worship 10:45 a.m., Wednesday Bible Study 6-7 p.m.; Everyone Welcome!

First Christian Church - Joyfully Worshipping & Serving 1079 S.E. Jefferson Street, Dallas, 503-623-2569. Pastor Darren Anderson. "Live Wire Worship" with Praise Team - 8:30 a.m., Adult, Youth & Children Sunday School - 9:30 a.m., Morning Worship - 10:30 a.m. (Nursery provided), Men's Bible Study - Thursday, 8:30 a.m. Christian Women's Fellowship - 2nd Tuesday, 1:00 pm (Sept through June). Please call church office for information about other meetings.

First Presbyterian Church - 879 S.W. Levens Street, Dallas, 503-623-3397. Pastor Sandy Larson invites you to come and share with us. Worship 10:30 a.m.; Adult Sunday School 9:00 am; Men's Breakfast & Bible Study Tues. 7:00 a.m.; Handicapped accessible. Bloodbank 4th Monday of even numbered months. Indoor Play Park.

Grace Community Church - 598 E. Ellendale Ave. PO Box 69, Dallas, 503-623-4961. Senior Pastor-Dave Bertolini, Pastor of Worship & Discipleship-Ryan Bucher, Pastor of Student Ministries-Ben Potloff. Sunday Worship: 1st Service-9:00 a.m. with Kids, Youth, & Adult Sunday School running concurrently. 2nd Worship Service-10:45 a.m. with Kids Worship running concurrently. Nursery provided for 0 - 2 year olds during both services. Office open Tuesday-Friday for office hours visit our website at www.graceindallas.org. All are welcome!

Living Hope City Church - 1156 SE Holman, Dallas. Family Worship 10:30 am. www.living-hopecitychurch.org Equipping Center & Offices 186 SE Mill St., Dallas. For more information call 503-623-6890.

Living Word Faith Fellowship - 830 SE Shelton Street, Dallas, 503-623-9062. Pastor Joan Siewert. Sunday Worship 10:00 a.m. Wednesday Worship 7:00 p.m. Children's Sunday service 10:00 a.m., nursery provided. Men's fellowship second Saturday of month breakfast at 8:00 a.m. at Murphy's Restaurant, Dallas. Pastor Michael Van Dyke in charge of men's fellowship. Call for additional information. Website: www.proclaimhim.org

Salt Creek Baptist Church - 15075 Salt Creek Road, Dallas, 503-623-2976. Senior pastor David Curtis. Sunday School 9:30 a.m. Sunday morning Worship 10:50 a.m. Nursery provided for worship services. Classes for all ages. Wednesday Senior High and Middle School Youth at 6:30 p.m. Please call for information about other meetings or visit our website at www.saltcreekchurch.org.

Seventh-Day Adventist Church - 589 SW Birch, P.O. Box 450, Dallas 97338-0450. 503-623-5872. Services on Saturday: 9:30 A.M. Sabbath School Bible Study for all age groups. 10:50 A.M. Worship Service. Office Hours: Monday, Wednesday, Friday, 9 to Noon. Pastor: Larry Brown

St. Thomas Episcopal Church - 1486 SW Levens St., Dallas (at the corner of Levens & Cherry) 503-623-8522. Email: stthomasdallas@gmail.com 10:00 a.m. Worship with Holy Eucharist. Sunday School and Nursery Care available during worship. Sundays 1:30-3:00 all ages FREE singing lessons. St. Thomas Episcopal Church 1486 SW Levens Dallas. Call Rebecca 503-559-5205 with questions. The Episcopal Church and St Thomas Welcomes you — please join us.

Trinity Lutheran Church - 320 SE Fir Villa Rd, Dallas, 503-623-2233. Pastor - David Pederson. Adult Sunday School 9:00 a.m. Worship Service 10:00 a.m.; Kids Church during 10:00 a.m. Worship. Youth Group HS/MS 11:30 a.m. Sundays. Free Medical Clinic 1st & 4th Saturday of each month. www.dallastlc.org. Catch us on Facebook.

United Methodist Church - A church with Open Hearts, Open Minds & Open Doors. 565 SE LaCreole Drive, Dallas, 503-623-2481. Pastor-Rev. Quinton Kimbrow. Summer Worship— June, July, August, Sept. 6th at 10 am followed by Sunday School. Child-care available. Handicap access. All are welcome! Email: dallasumc@questoffice.net Website: www.sites.umcdallas.com

Valley Life Center (Assemblies of God) - 1795 S.E. Miller Ave., Dallas, 503-623-4116. Pastor Chris Barker, Children's Director, Crystal Barker, Sunday Morning Service 10:30 a.m., Wednesday Family Night 6:30 p.m. Please call for more information or visit our website at www.valleylifecenter.com

FALLS CITY

Falls City Christian Church 233 S. Main Street, Falls City, Oregon 97344, 503-787-3104 Sunday Service: 10 am; Website: www.fallscitycc.com

Falls City United Methodist Church - 242 N. Main Street, Falls City, 503-851-3213. Pastor Rebecca Strader. Morning worship Sunday 9:20 am. All denominations are welcome. www.fallscityumc.org

Mountain Gospel Fellowship - 303 N. Main, Falls City, 503-787-8037. Sunday School 10:00 a.m., Worship Service 11:00 a.m., Wed. Dinner 6:15 p.m. Everyone welcome just as you are. Join Us!

Seventh-Day Adventist Church - 205 N. Main, Falls City 97344, 503-787-3907. Pastor Larry Brown. Sabbath School Sat. 9:30 am-10:40 am; Worship Service 11 am. Community Service Center (Food Bank) third Wed. of each month, noon-3pm.

INDEPENDENCE

Buena Vista Community Church - 11355 Church St., Buena Vista, Independence. Pastor Larry Lyon. Sunday School 9:45 a.m., Morning Worship 11 a.m.

Cornerstone Church of God - 4395 Independence Hwy, Independence, 503-838-5119. Sunday Service 10:30 a.m., Wednesdays 6:30 p.m. Nursery available.

First Baptist Church - A warm, friendly church that cares about you! Located at 1505 Monmouth St., Independence (across from Central High School); 503-838-1001. Senior Pastor Michael Parks. **Sundays:** Worship Service 11 am **Wednesdays:** AWANA 7 pm (during the school year). **Thursdays:** Youth Group 6:15pm. Join us for small groups and life groups throughout the week. *First Baptist Church has ministries for children, youth, adults, families and seniors, throughout the week. Check us out at www.independencfirstbaptist.com*

Life Center Foursquare Church - 437 D Street, Independence, OR Phone: 503-838-6507. Pastor Larry Grateak. Worship Service and Sunday School starts at 10:30 a.m. Various studies, Prayer Groups and Home Fellowships available throughout the week. Call for more information. You are welcome! Find us on Facebook.

St. Patrick Parish, Catholic - 1275 E St., Independence. 503-838-5801. Father Henry Guillen Vega Masses Sat., vigil 5 p.m.; Sunday 9:30 a.m. (English), 11 a.m. and 7 p.m. (Spanish); Weekdays Mon, Tues, Wed, & Thurs. 9am, Saturday 7 p.m. (Spanish). Evergreen Nursing Home: Holy Days 9 a.m. (Eng) & 7 p.m. (Eng/Span). Sacrament of Reconciliation: Sat 3:30-4:30 p.m. or by appointment. Religious Education: RCIA Mon 7:00-8:30 p.m.; Mid-High & High School Grades Mon 7:00-8:30p.m.; Grades 1-4 Tues. 7:00-8:30 p.m. WOU Campus Ministry: Mass Sun. 5:00 p.m. at 315 N. Knox St., Monmouth followed by a social hour.

MONMOUTH

Christ The King Christian Church - Meets at 959 Church St. W., Monmouth 7:00 pm Saturday Night. Christ The King Christian Church is a conservative, contemporary, charismatic Biblical Church. At Christ the King we learn: the truths of the Bible, how to live Biblical truths, how to please God, and how to be a blessing to all people. Come and join us as we learn and grow together. Everyone is welcome. Wally Wildman, senior pastor. For more information call 503-623-2262. www.ctkmonmouth.com

Christ's Church Methodist & Presbyterian United - Come care and share with us. 412 Clay Street West, Monmouth, 503-838-1724. Pastor Rebecca Strader. Worship Service 11 a.m. Call for information on small groups.

Church of Christ - 127 N. Heffley St., Monmouth, 503-838-2360. Minister - Dan Brewer, Youth Minister - Jon Siegrist. Sunday School 9:45 a.m., Worship Service 10:45 a.m., Sunday Evening Service 6 p.m., Wednesday Service 6 p.m.

Faith Lutheran Church - 200 Monmouth-Independence Hwy., Monmouth (the church with the lighted cross on the "S" curve). Summer Schedule: Adult Bible Class 8:15 am; Divine Service of Holy Communion 9:30 am. Pastor Dallas C.R. Dubke. www.FaithLutheranMonmouth.org; 503-838-3459. Everyone is welcome!

Heart to Heart Church - 191 N. Monmouth Ave., Monmouth (across street from WOU). Pastor Jim Miller. email: Jim@h2hchurch.com. Sunday School for children and adults 10:00 a.m.; Worship Service 11:00 a.m.; Prayer & Praise 6:00 p.m.; Seekers Night - Monday 6:00 p.m.; Children & Adult Bible Study - Wednesday 7:00 p.m.; Seven Cities Worship Service Friday 8 p.m.; Everybody welcome. Information: church 503-838-0537. www.h2hchurch.com

Monmouth Christian Church - 959 Church Street W, Monmouth, OR 97361; Office: (503) 838-1145; Fax: (503) 838-1162; Email: mcc@mymcc.cc; Website: mymcc.cc; Lead Pastor: Sean Bitzer; Pastors: Ulysses Vela, Mary Weinbender, & Seth Halligan; Sunday Worship Service: 10 am, English & Spanish; children's programming for birth to 6th grades also available. Momentum (7th & 8th Grades) meet Tuesdays 6:30-8:00 pm MCC; Join us this Sunday in person or live online at www.mymcc.tv.

New LIFE Ministries - we're growing in Polk County! CHILDREN'S CHURCH NOW AVAILABLE! We are a God-loving, Bible-believing, non-denominational church body. This church is a little different, in that it's not just a church service, but is all about being a "service church". We strive to seek out and serve the needs of the community. It is our hope that God will use us to make a difference. Come join us! We meet at Ash Creek School, 1360 N 16th Street, Monmouth every Sunday morning at 10:00-11:00 am. Our minister is Marion Seick. Feel free to call us at (503) 871-5207. Please come visit and worship with us this Sunday!

Praise Assembly 189 Monmouth Ave S., Monmouth (locations in McMinnville and Willamina as well). Our English worship gathering is 11 am on Sundays, followed by a Spanish service at 2 pm. Kid's church available for 12 and under. Youth group meets at 9:30 Sunday morning. Other ministries include: Celebrate Recovery (Tues. 7 pm), College Bible study (Wed, 7 pm), and Spanish Bible study (Thurs, 7 pm). Please check our website for the most up-to-date information, www.praiseonline.net, or call us at 503-837-0300.

St. Hilda's Episcopal Church 245 Main St. W., Monmouth, 503-838-6087, sthildas.church.org Sunday Eucharist - 10:00 am followed by Fellowship. Children's Sunday School & Adult Bible Study 9:00 am. Wednesday Worship at 8:00 am and 7:00 pm. Nursery care provided. Call for periodic small groups and celebrations. All are welcome!