

High Stakes Testing: Is it Worth the Costs?

A Presentation Created by the
VOICE Education Action Team

Recent Headlines

“Significant amount of schools receive D’s and F’s”

-KFOR.com

“Dropout rates double at Oklahoma City Public Schools.”

-KOCO.com

“New state law will hold third graders back for reading deficiencies.”

-OKCFox.com

**Where does high the
stakes testing culture
come from?**

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) History

- Sandy Kress



- Dallas County Democratic Party
- Dallas ISD School Board
- Partnership with George W. Bush
- TAAS and McGraw-Hill
- NCLB

TESTING

McGraw/
Hill

Harcourt

Riverside
Houghton
Mifflin

NCS/
Pearson

ETS



Reading
First



No Child
Left Behind
Act
"NCLB"



Supplemental
Education
Services



Educational
Management
Organization

Oklahoma is now entrenched in a testing culture

- Number of tests students are REQUIRED to take during their K-12 career.
- The high-stakes nature of the tests
- The A-F letter grades given to schools based on these tests.

Testing in Oklahoma

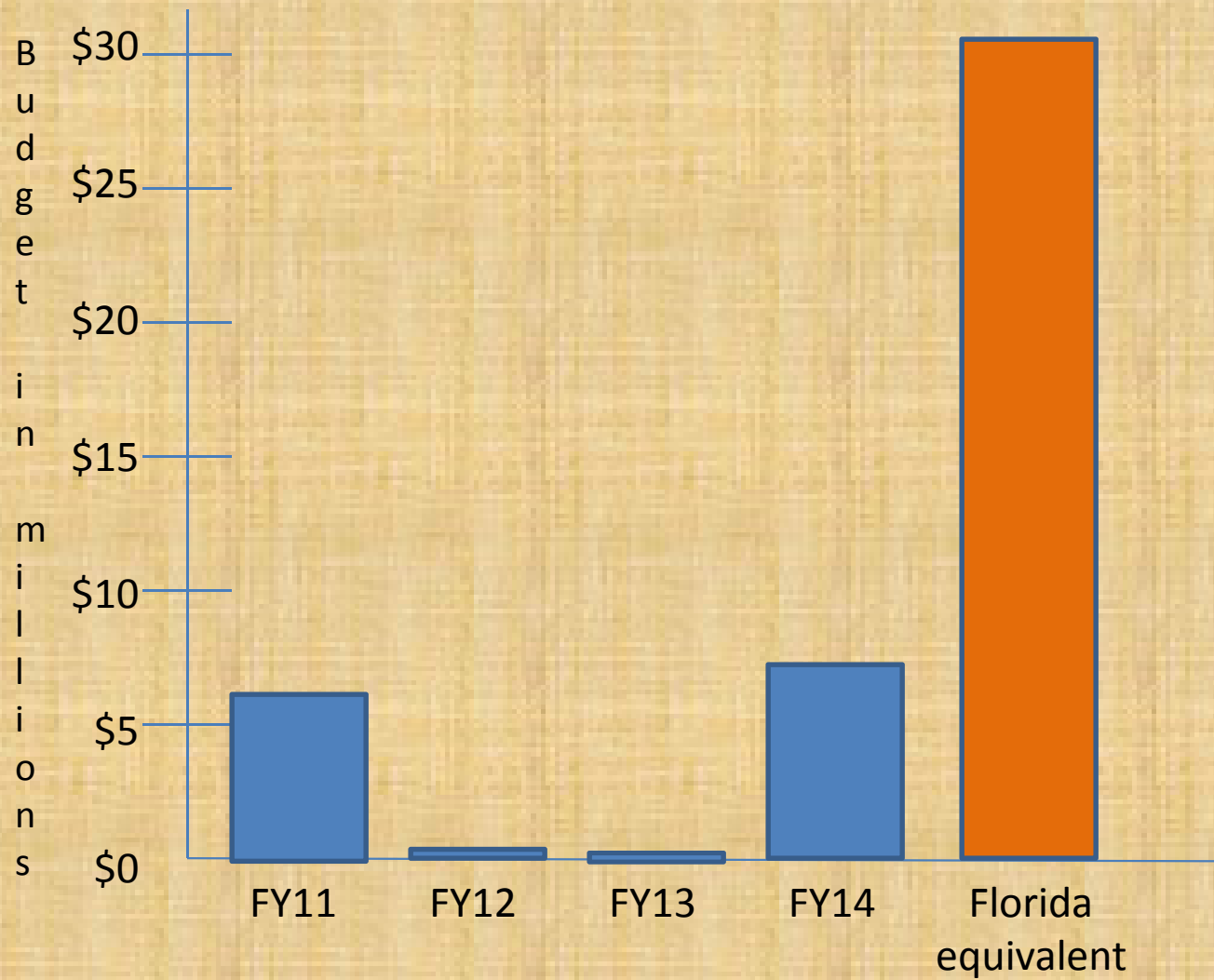
- During a student's career K-12, s/he will take no fewer than 28 mandated high stakes assessments and could take as many as 46.
- Additionally, benchmark tests are given four times annually in all grades in most districts.

Third Grade Reading Law

“Beginning with the 2011-2012 school year, if the reading deficiency of a student, as identified based on assessments administered...is not remediated by the end of third grade, as demonstrated by scoring at the unsatisfactory level on the reading portion of the statewide third-grade criterion-referenced test, the student shall be retained in third grade.”

*Oklahoma Reading Sufficiency Act
RSA-70-1210*

Reading Sufficiency Act Funding



Other High Stakes for Students:

Eighth grade reading test failure:
no driver's license

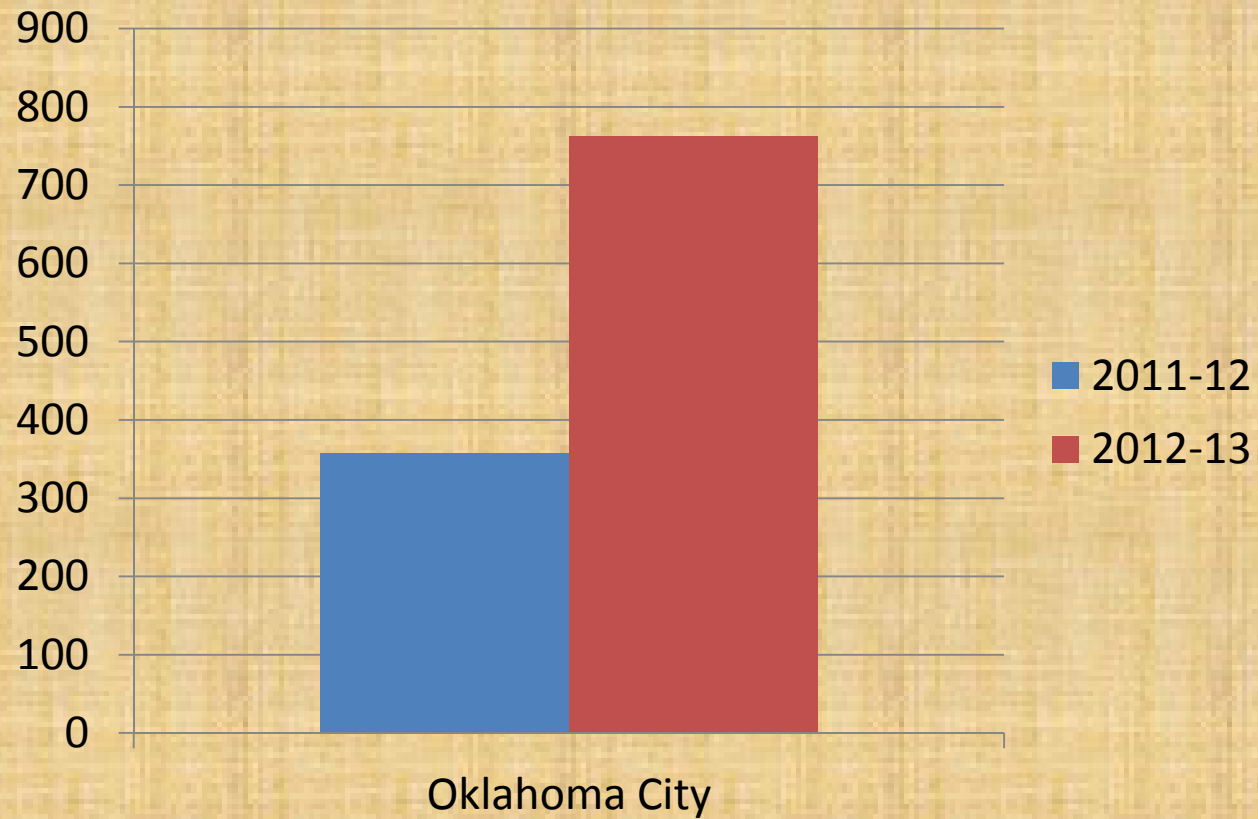


End-of-Instruction tests:
Must pass 4 of 7 to graduate



Algebra I Algebra II Geometry English II
English III Biology US History

Current Drop-Out Rates

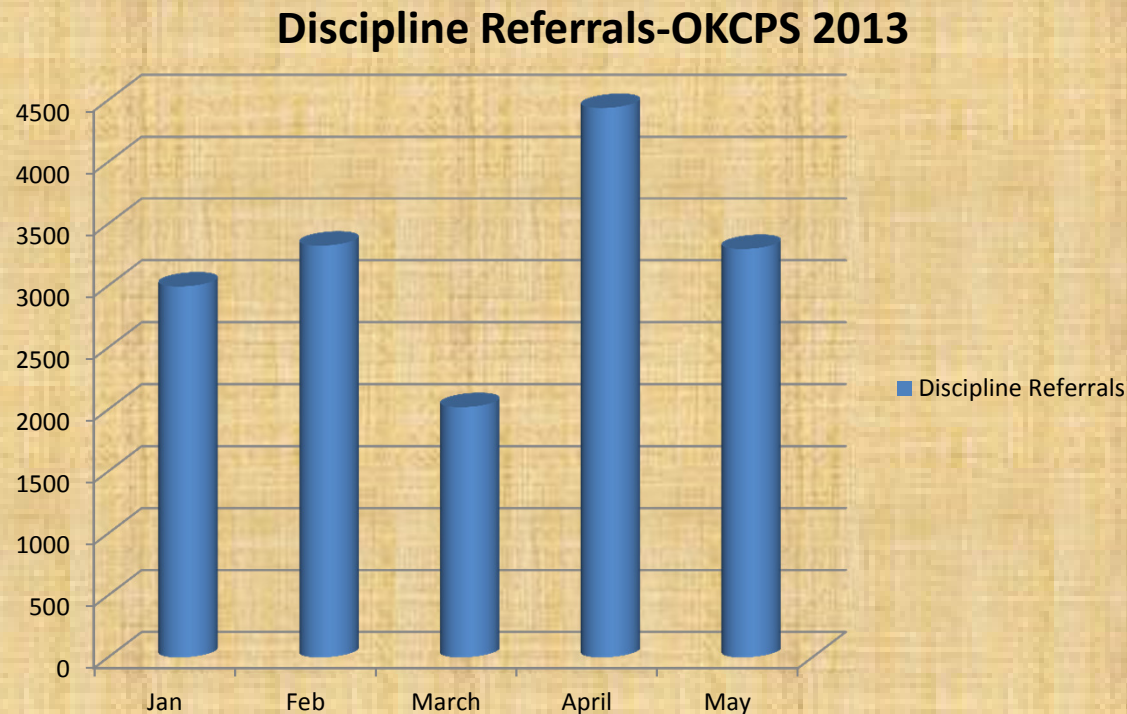


Impact of Testing

- On Students
- On Teachers
- On Schools

Psychological affects on students

Increased discipline referrals during
six-week testing window.



Impact on Students

- Decreased quality instruction time

173 vs. 125

Test Results

- Tests are taken in April and early May yet final scores are not released to schools until September or October.
- Compare this timeline to other tests that are administered across the country:

Assessment	Total Time	Receipt of Results
ACT Exam	3 hours, 25 minutes	3-8 weeks
SAT Exam	3 hours, 20 minutes	3 weeks
GRE (Graduate Record Exam)	2 hours, 50 minutes	3-6 weeks
NCLEX-RN (National Council Licensure Exam for Reg. Nurses)	Maximum of 6 hours	Preliminary results: 48 hrs Final results in one month
Commercial Pilot Exam	3 hours	1-2 weeks
MCAT (Medical College Admission Examination)	4 hours, 5 minutes	4-5 weeks
Oklahoma Bar Exam	2 days	7 weeks
Average 8 th Grader in 2015	12 hours (nine tests over 4 days)	4-5 months

Teachers leaving the profession

- One-third of new teachers leave the profession within the first 3 years.
- Almost 50% leave within 5 years.

Value Added Measures:

$$y_{ti} = \mathbf{X}_i \boldsymbol{\beta} + \sum_{r=1}^L y_{t-r,i} \gamma_{t-r} + \sum_{q=1}^Q \mathbf{Z}_{qi} \boldsymbol{\theta}_q + e_i$$

where y_{ti} is the observed score at time t for student i , \mathbf{X}_i is the model matrix for the student and school level demographic variables, $\boldsymbol{\beta}$ is a vector of coefficients capturing the effect of any demographics included in the model, $y_{t-r,i}$ is the observed lag score at time $t-r$ ($r \in \{1, 2, \dots, L\}$), γ is the coefficient vector capturing the effects of lagged scores, \mathbf{Z}_{qi} is a design matrix with one column for each unit in q ($q \in \{1, 2, \dots, Q\}$) and one row for each student record in the database. The entries in the matrix indicate the association between the test represented in the row and the unit (e.g., school, teacher) represented in the column. We often concatenate the sub-matrices such that $\mathbf{Z} = \{\mathbf{Z}_1, \dots, \mathbf{Z}_Q\}$. $\boldsymbol{\theta}_q$ is the vector of effects for the units within a level. For example, it might be the vector of school or teacher effects which may be estimated as random or fixed effects. When the vector of effects is treated as random, then we assume $\boldsymbol{\theta}_q \sim N(0, \sigma_{\boldsymbol{\theta}_q}^2)$ for each level of q .

Grading Schools

- A-F School grades are now comprised of 100% test results.
- Changes in grading laws caused
Oklahoma City Public Schools 1 → 39
Tulsa Public Schools 8 → 36

School Performance Grades

- Overall school performance grades are based on a combination of four criteria:
 1. Student achievement scores (50%)
 2. Annual learning gains (25%)
 3. Improvement of lowest 25% (25%)
 4. Whole school improvement (Bonus Pts)

Grading Schools

- A recent OU/OSU study on the A-F grading system identified three main problems:
 - 1) Small variances in test scores yield significant differences in grades.
 - 2) Single grades mask school performance.
 - 3) Performance of low-income students are hidden in high-performing schools.

Other Impacts

A Florida study found the difference in housing values between a grade of an 'A' and a grade of a 'B', and a 'B' and a 'C' was \$10,000, holding constant other measures of school quality, neighborhood and property attributes.

A Word About Common Core

- The CCSS was a collaborative effort of the National Governors' Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers in 2009.
- The purpose was to create a common set of standards to which all students would be held.
- Concerns related to CCSS: cost/number of assessments, technology needed to implement the assessments, and profiteering by testing companies.

VOICE's Action Plan

- Sept 26-28, 2013: 3-day training
- Oct-Nov: Individual Meetings
- Dec-March: Presentations/House Meetings
- April, 2014: Alternative Grading System
Development
- April-May, 2014: Meet with the candidates
- June 8, 2014: Accountability Session

For More Information, visit

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In Closing...

- Share a story about students, schools, testing...
- What makes an “A” school?