

Dear Principal,

Please excuse my child, \_\_\_\_\_ ,  
from all three Foundation Skills Assessment  
(FSA) tests.

I am concerned that this test will have negative  
effects on my child's learning, motivation, and  
self-esteem.

I understand that the ministry provides  
instructions to principals on how to exempt  
students from the FSA tests if they receive a  
letter from parents requesting that their child  
be exempted.

Thank you for your co-operation.

Sincerely,

Parent/guardian signature

# FSA testing can be harmful to students!



The Ministry of Education has been administering Foundation Skills Assessment tests to students in Grades 4 and 7 since 2000. Teachers are so concerned about the negative effects of these tests on student learning that they are recommending parents withdraw their children.



British Columbia Teachers' Federation

## What is the FSA?

The Foundations Skills Assessment (FSA) is a set of annual provincial tests in reading comprehension, first draft writing, and some aspects of numeracy. These tests do not count toward students' marks in any way.

## Who writes the FSA tests?

The ministry expects most Grade 4 and 7 students, except some students with special needs and beginning ESL students, to write the tests. Parents may request the principal to excuse a student.



## When are the FSA tests?

This year FSA tests will be given to students between May 7 and 18, 2007.

## Why are teachers concerned?

The FSA tests do not help teachers teach your child. Teachers work with students in classrooms every day, constantly assessing and supporting their learning. Teachers strive to meet the needs of every student and foster students' love of learning.

These tests do not help students learn. In fact, they can have a negative effect on students' motivation and learning.

These tests take valuable time away from teaching and learning. Hours and hours of practising for the tests takes time away from richer, more meaningful learning experiences.

These tests are expensive. They take money away from priorities such as textbooks, support for students with special needs, science equipment, and library books.

## What can you do as a parent?

- Withdraw your child from the FSA tests by writing a letter to the school principal. Simply tear off and sign the sample letter on the back of this brochure.
- Raise concerns with the teachers and principal at your child's school.
- Talk with other parents about the negative effects of FSA tests.
- Bring the issue to your Parent Advisory Council.
- Raise concerns with your local school trustees.
- Go to the BCTF web site [bctf.ca/fsa.aspx](http://bctf.ca/fsa.aspx) for more information on teachers' concerns and the FSA tests.