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ABSTRACT

There are many reasons why teachers evaluate students: to provide colleges and prospective employers with some measure of a student's skill level; to inform parents of their child's progress; and to provide both teacher and student with a guide to areas needing further attention in the teaching and learning process, to mention three. Just as there are many reasons for evaluating students, there are also many means of assessing student competency. One of these is the final examination. Educators do not agree on the value of the final examination, however. The purpose of this ERS Information Aid is to present an overview not only of the basic views regarding the use of final exams, but to describe alternatives to this means of assessment and to report on the extent to which school systems have adopted alternatives. Also included are sample policies relating to exemptions from final exams. (Author)

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# ERS INFORMATION AID

Educational Research Service, Inc., 1815 North Fort Myer Drive, Arlington, Virginia 22209

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## EXEMPTIONS FROM FINAL EXAMINATION REQUIREMENTS FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

There are many reasons why teachers evaluate students: to provide colleges and prospective employers with some measure of a student's skill level; to inform parents of their child's progress; and to provide both teacher and student with a guide to areas needing further attention in the teaching and learning process, to mention three. Just as there are many reasons for evaluating students, there also are many means of assessing student competency. One of these is the final examination.<sup>a/</sup>

Educators do not agree on the value of the final examination, however. The purpose of this *ERS Information Aid* is to present an overview not only of the basic views regarding the use of final exams, but to describe alternatives to this means of assessment and to report on the extent to which school systems have adopted alternatives. Also included are sample policies relating to exemptions from final exams.

### PROS AND CONS OF FINAL EXAMINATIONS

One proponent of the final examination states that it is important that students "synthesize concepts and thus gain an overview of the semester's work." (4:49)<sup>b/</sup> Another expands on this position, as follows:

They may gain an increment--ranging from small to large--of proficiency in core skills during the pre-exam review. They may exchange ideas, sound out theories, and hear their peers expound on phases of a subject that they may otherwise have excluded from consideration. They become confronted with the need to assign priorities. And, most fortunately, some students experience that exhilarating satisfaction of being able to comprehend the whole after months of visualizing and conceptualizing "parts." (1:36)

An opponent of final exams contends, however, that:

1. Finals waste precious time--instructors' and their students'--all of which could be better put to learning, to creating, to doing.
2. Finals produce tensions, irritations and bad feelings at the end of a semester, precisely at a time which should conclude with a warm, good feeling of unity and growth.
3. Unfortunately in too many cases, students rarely see their final examinations. Therefore, they do not see their errors or learn from their mistakes. This may also lead to the possibility of unfairness in grading with little or no recourse for the student. "You wrote a poor final, so your grade went down to C." *Fait accompli.*
4. Finals help make a teacher lazy. The teacher who relies on a final examination (or the school that may "require" one) for measuring a student's performance is simply grabbing for a grade. He can relax smugly and lecture in security assured, "I'll

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a/ "Final examination," as used in this report, refers to tests administered to students at the end of a course, covering the subject matter included in the course. They are distinguished from proficiency examinations in broad subject areas, such as the New York State Regents' Examinations.

b/ References cited in the body of text are noted by numbers within parentheses. The number before the colon indicates the entry number within the list of references on page 4; the number following the colon indicates the page within the entry. If no colon appears, the citation refers to the entire entry number. Multiple citations are separated by commas.

find out who's been paying attention at finals." He is relieved of teaching, of exploring, of probing to find his students' weaknesses so he can offer help.

5. Finals emphasize grades not growth, cramming not studying, divisive tactics, not cooperation. (2:25)

#### ALTERNATIVES TO FINAL EXAMINATIONS

Although he does not advocate the elimination of final examinations, Harl R. Douglass states that "there is fairly universal agreement that not too much importance should be attached to final examinations and that greatly increased attention should be given by most teachers and in most schools to evaluation types throughout the semester or year." (3)

Nevertheless, Gertrude Clark, a teacher at Chatham High School (New Jersey), favors the retention of final examinations with the following modification: extend the final exam period to 3½ weeks--the first week of which is devoted to "gleaning the major issues, areas, concepts, etc., from the minor ones" (through team discussions and comparisons of their results with the teacher's) and the second week of which is set aside for exam preparation (during which students would work on preparing questions that might comprise the final). In fact, there might be preliminary agreement that a certain percentage of the exam questions would be drawn from those suggested by students. During the last half of the second week the teacher would prepare the examination. The students would take the examination during the third week. The last half-week would be reserved for discussion of the examinations. (1)

As another approach, Mollenkott proposes the "open examination." (4) The exam would be composed of essay-type questions that require pupils to organize facts to support each one's thesis on each question. In other words, there would be no "canned" answers. The exams would be administered in this way: all students would receive copies of the exam and would be directed to scan it. Each then chooses whether to take an open-book or closed-book exam. Those taking the open-book exam are seated at the back of the room. They are expected to provide more detail in their answers and will be graded more strictly than those taking the closed-book exam. Three other options exist. All students are allowed to pick among several questions--doing three of five, or five of seven, for instance. If a student who begins the closed-book exam decides he would do better on an open-book basis, he may move to the back of the room and use books and notes, but the entire exam will be graded as an open-book exam. A student opting for the closed-book exam may substitute a question of his own for any or all of the teacher-made options, but he will also be graded on the quality of his question. All students are encouraged to prepare for this option, but it is available only to those who choose the closed-book exam to keep students from bringing prepared answers into the room and merely copying them out. One problem with this proposal, Mollenkott concedes, is that it is more applicable to certain subjects than to others.

Other alternatives are suggested by Denholtz: giving take-home exams or projects in lieu of final examinations; exempting "A" and "B" students from taking finals; and doing away with finals entirely. (2:25)

#### EXTENT OF POLICY MODIFICATION IN LOCAL SCHOOL SYSTEMS

To obtain data on the extent to which schools and school systems have adopted alternatives to final examinations, Educational Research Service included the following question in its 1973 "Selected School Practices" survey:

Are final examinations required as a matter of written or unwritten policy in all of your high schools for all students? If NO, what exemptions apply (e.g., graduating seniors exempted; at discretion of individual teacher; at discretion of principal; if certain grade average is maintained; in certain subjects only)?

The questionnaire, sent to the 585 school systems enrolling 12,000 or more pupils and to a selected group of 201 smaller systems, yielded 429 (73.3 percent) usable replies to the question. The following tabulation shows the number and percent of systems in which some students are eligible for exemptions from final examinations and the number and percent of systems that require all students to take finals:

<u>Enrollment groups</u>	<u>Number and percent of responding systems</u>	
	<u>Some students exempted from final exams</u>	<u>All students required to take final exams</u>
25,000 or more pupils	93 (69.9%)	40 (30.0%)
6,000-24,999 pupils	140 (57.4%)	104 (47.6%)
3,000-5,999 pupils	22 (68.8%)	10 (31.2%)
Less than 3,000 pupils	9 (45.0%)	11 (55.0%)
	<u>264 (61.5%)</u>	<u>165 (38.5%)</u>

The individual replies from the 264 school districts reporting student exemptions from final examinations are shown in the system-by-system listing beginning on page 5. A list of systems reporting no exceptions to their final examination policies begins on page 13.

As shown in the system-by-system table, the possible combinations of factors determining a student's exemption from a final examination are numerous. Teacher discretion was the most frequently reported factor, by 114 systems (43.2 percent); often teacher discretion was combined with principal's and/or departmental approval. In 52 reporting systems (19.7 percent) only seniors may be exempted from final examinations, and in another seven systems seniors are exempted on one basis and other students on another basis. Grade average is an important factor or the sole factor in 54 systems (20.5 percent). Respondents in 16 districts (6.1 percent) said that the subject of the course determines whether final examinations must be given; however, these 16 do not include systems reporting the exemption of special education students only. (Such systems are listed with those reporting no exemptions.)

In five systems a good attendance record can exempt a student from finals, and one system uses conduct (the accumulation of less than a specified number of demerits) as a determinant of exemptions.

The assignment of projects, take-home exams, or other "evaluative activities" in lieu of a final examination was reported by eight systems (in one system this applies only to seniors). Three systems reported that no final examinations are required of any students (Willingboro Township, N.J.; Cleveland Heights-University Heights School District, Ohio; and Cranford, N.J.). St. Bernard Parish, Louisiana, reported that its schools have "a continuous progress program; evaluation takes place when students complete course objectives."

The entry of "no details" for 43 districts (16.3 percent) in the system-by-system listing indicates that exceptions are allowed, but the respondents did not enumerate them.

#### Sample Policies Regarding Exemptions from Final Examinations

Reproduced on pages 15 and 16 are four sample policies outlining various kinds of exemptions from final examinations. These were submitted by school systems responding to the ERS survey.

## REFERENCES

1. Clark, Gertrude. "Final Exams Revisited." *NJEA Review*, 46 (September 1972), pp. 36, 61.
2. Denholtz, Elaine. "Fie on Finals." *NJEA Review*, 45 (April 1972), pp. 24-25.
3. Douglass, Harl R. *Modern Administration of Secondary Schools*. Second edition. Boston, Mass.: Ginn and Co., 1963. p. 382.
4. Mollenkott, Virginia R. "The Open Examination." *Today's Education*, 31 (October 1972), pp 49-50.

EXEMPTIONS TO FINAL EXAMINATION REQUIREMENTS FOR SECONDARY SCHOOL PUPILS  
IN 264 REPORTING SCHOOL SYSTEMS

School system	Exemption	School system	Exemption
<u>25,000 or more pupils (93 systems)</u>		SACRAMENTO, CALIF.	Required in courses required for college; others at discretion of individual departments.
BIRMINGHAM, ALA., city schools	Straight "A" students	SAN BERNARDINO, CALIF.	No details
HUNTSVILLE, ALA., city schools	At discretion of principal and teacher	SAN FRANCISCO, CALIF.	At discretion of principal and/or teacher
MOBILE COUNTY, ALA. (Mobile)	No details	SANTA ANA, CALIF.	Certain subjects
PHOENIX, ARIZ.--Union High School District	Graduating seniors exempt	TORRANCE, CALIF.	At discretion of principal
SCOTTSDALE, ARIZ.	Teachers may exempt pupils on basis of achievement; principals may exempt teachers on basis of other satisfactory approaches to evaluation.	JEFFERSON COUNTY, COLO. (Lakewood)	At discretion of principal and teacher
TUCSON, ARIZ.	At discretion of teacher and principal	PUEBLO, COLO.	No details
ANAHEIM, CALIF.--Union High School District	At discretion of teacher	HARTFORD, CONN.	Seniors with "B+" or better average in the subject
FRESNO, CALIF.	Most high schools do give final exams; however, there is no district policy requiring this.	DADE COUNTY, FLA. (Miami)	Each school makes its own recommendations, subject to approval of area superintendent.
LONG BEACH, CALIF.	At discretion of teacher	DUVAL COUNTY, FLA. (Jacksonville)	No details
LOS ANGELES, CALIF.	No details	PINELLAS COUNTY, FLA. (Clearwater)	No details
MT. DIABLO SCHOOL DISTRICT, CALIF. (Concord)	At discretion of teacher in some cases	VOLUSIA COUNTY, FLA. (DeLand)	At discretion of principal and staff
NORWALK-LA MIRADA SCHOOL DISTRICT, CALIF. (Norwalk)	Varies from school to school, teacher to teacher, subject area to subject area; principal is key; most require final exams.	DE KALB COUNTY, GA. (Decatur)	Final exams not required by policy; if exams are given, no individual students are exempt.
OAKLAND, CALIF.	At discretion of department head, teacher, and principal	FULTON COUNTY, GA. (Atlanta)	No details
ORANGE, CALIF.	At discretion of principal	RICHMOND COUNTY, GA. (Augusta)	Seniors exempt
RICHMOND, CALIF.	At discretion of principal and teacher	CHICAGO, ILL.	At discretion of teacher
		ROCKFORD, ILL.	At discretion of principal and teacher

## EXEMPTIONS TO FINAL EXAMINATION REQUIREMENTS FOR SECONDARY SCHOOL PUPILS (Continued)

School system	Exemption	School system	Exemption
<u>25,000 or more pupils (Continued)</u>		MINNEAPOLIS, MINN.	At discretion of teacher, with approval of principal
SHAWNEE MISSION, KANS.	At discretion of teacher; seniors "in good standing" may be excused.	ST. PAUL, MINN.	Graduating seniors
FAYETTE COUNTY, KY. (Lexington)	No details	LINCOLN, NEBR.	At discretion of teacher
LOUISVILLE, KY., city schools	At discretion of school staff	OMAHA, NEBR.	No details
CALCASIEU PARISH, LA. (Lake Charles)	No details	WASHOE COUNTY, NEV. (Reno)	At discretion of principal and department staff
EAST BATON ROUGE PARISH, LA. (Baton Rouge)	At discretion of principal and teacher	ALBUQUERQUE, N. MEX.	No details
JEFFERSON PARISH, LA. (Gretna)	Graduating seniors with specified grade average	GASTON COUNTY, N. C. (Gastonia)	Graduating seniors with 90% average in a course
NEW ORLEANS, LA.	No details	GREENSBORO, N. C., city schools	Grade average requirement
ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY, MD. (Annapolis)	Only teachers of college-bound students are required to give final exams.	WAKE COUNTY, N. C. (Raleigh)	Graduating seniors; other students with "A" average
BALTIMORE COUNTY, MD. (Towson)	Determined by principal and staff of each school	WINSTON-SALEM/FORSYTH COUNTY, N. C. (Winston-Salem)	Seniors
HARFORD COUNTY, MD. (Bel Air)	At discretion of teacher	CINCINNATI, OHIO	At discretion of junior high principal to require exams; required of all students in senior high.
MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MD. (Rockville)	Final evaluation act required; may be oral or written exam or report, or some other project.	DAYTON, OHIO	No details
PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MD. (Upper Marlboro)	Graduating seniors exempted at discretion of teacher.	PARMA, OHIO	At discretion of teacher or department
WORCESTER, MASS.	Graduating seniors	YOUNGSTOWN, OHIO	At discretion of teacher
FLINT, MICH.	No details	TULSA, OKLA.	At discretion of principal and staff
GRAND RAPIDS, MICH.	At discretion of principal and staff	PORTLAND, ORE.	No details
LANSING, MICH.	Graduating seniors	PHILADELPHIA, PA.	No details
WARREN, MICH.	At discretion of principal; grade averages	CHARLESTON COUNTY, S. C. (Charleston)	Seniors with 90 or above average exempted
BLOOMINGTON, MINN.	At discretion of teacher	COLUMBIA, S. C.	At discretion of principal, and in some cases, teachers

## EXEMPTIONS TO FINAL EXAMINATION REQUIREMENTS FOR SECONDARY SCHOOL PUPILS (Continued)

School system	Exemption	School system	Exemption
<u>25,000 or more pupils (Continued)</u>			
GREENVILLE COUNTY, S. C. (Greenville)	Exam policy determined by each school; most having exams allow some exceptions.	RICHMOND, VA., city schools	No details
HAMILTON COUNTY, TENN. (Chattanooga)	Policy exempting some may be set by each school.	VIRGINIA BEACH, VA.	Seniors with overall average of "B"
KNOXVILLE, TENN., city schools	No details	EDMONDS SCHOOL DISTRICT, WASH. (Lynnwood)	At discretion of teacher
METROPOLITAN SCHOOL SYSTEM, NASHVILLE, TENN.	Senior with certain grade point average	HIGHLINE SCHOOL DISTRICT, WASH. (Seattle)	At discretion of teacher
AUSTIN, TEXAS	Graduating seniors who have completed all assignments, with semester grade average of "B" or better, and no 6-weeks grade below "B-".	SPOKANE, WASH.	No details
EL PASO, TEXAS	Graduating seniors	TACOMA, WASH.	No details
HOUSTON, TEXAS	Graduating seniors with "B" or better average	KANAWHA COUNTY, W. VA. (Charleston)	No details
LUBBOCK, TEXAS	All students with less than 10 demerits	MADISON, WIS.	At discretion of principal and teacher
PASADENA, TEXAS	Graduating seniors if certain grade average is maintained; others if certain attendance record is maintained	MILWAUKEE, WIS.	May be exempted from some subjects on basis of grade average but all pupils must take some final exams each year.
SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH	No details	<hr/>	
FAIRFAX COUNTY, VA. (Fairfax)	Any group or class, at discretion of teacher, with approval of principal, may be exempted.	<u>6,000-24,999 pupils (140 systems)</u>	
HAMPTON, VA.	Seniors with "B" averages	TUSCALOOSA, ALA., city schools	"A" average students
HENRICO COUNTY, VA. (Highland Springs)	Graduating seniors	FORT SMITH, ARK.	Graduating seniors if certain grade average maintained
NEWPORT NEWS, VA.	Second semester exemption in grades 8-12 for students with "B" average	LITTLE ROCK, ARK., city schools	Students absent or tardy 3 days or less from a class (senior high schools only)
NORFOLK, VA.	Final exams not required in junior high schools; required in senior high schools	ABC SCHOOL DISTRICT, CALIF. (Artesia)	At discretion of teacher
		ALAMEDA, CALIF.	At discretion of high school department
		ALHAMBRA, CALIF.	At discretion of each department in a school
		BERKELEY, CALIF.	Required in all regular high schools; at discretion of teacher in continuation high schools

## EXEMPTIONS TO FINAL EXAMINATION REQUIREMENTS FOR SECONDARY SCHOOL PUPILS (Continued)

School system	Exemption	School system	Exemption
<u>6,000-24,999 pupils (Continued)</u>		NEWARK, DEL.	No details
BURBANK, CALIF.	No details	MANATEE COUNTY, FLA. (Bradenton)	Some exemptions for high grades
DOWNEY, CALIF.	Graduating seniors	MARION COUNTY, FLA. (Ocala)	Students with all "A" and "B" grades
MODESTO, CALIF.	At discretion of teacher	PASCO COUNTY, FLA. (Dade City)	Graduating seniors exempt; others at discretion of teacher, on class-wide basis
PALO ALTO, CALIF.	At discretion of each department in a school	BOISE, IDAHO	No details
POMONA, CALIF.	At discretion of teacher	GLENBARD TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT, ILL. (Glen Ellyn)	Graduating seniors, at discretion of teacher and dean of students
ROWLAND SCHOOL DISTRICT, CALIF. (Rowland Heights)	At discretion of teacher	MT. PROSPECT, ILL.-- Township High School District	Each school sets own policies
SAN LORENZO, CALIF.	At discretion of each school	EAST ALLEN COUNTY, IND. (New Haven)	Students with "B" or better grade average
SANTA ROSA, CALIF.	At discretion of teacher	GREATER CLARK COUNTY, IND. (Jeffersonville)	At discretion of teacher
SEQUOIA UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT, CALIF. (Redwood City)	At discretion of each department and teacher	HAMMOND, IND.	No details
VALLEJO, CALIF.	At discretion of teacher	MONROE COUNTY, IND. (Bloomington)	At discretion of principal and department chairman
VISALIA, CALIF.	In certain subjects	MUNCIE, IND.	At discretion of teacher
WEST COVINA, CALIF.	At discretion of teacher	NEW ALBANY-FLOYD COUNTY SCHOOL CORPORATION, IND. (New Albany)	At discretion of teacher
WHITTIER, CALIF.--Union High School District	At discretion of teacher	PERRY TOWNSHIP, IND. (Indianapolis)	At discretion of each department (at present only math department gives June finals)
LITTLETON, COLO.	At discretion of teacher	CEDAR RAPIDS, IOWA	At discretion of teacher
POUDRE SCHOOL DISTRICT, COLO. (Ft. Collins)	At discretion of teacher in case of graduating senior	COUNCIL BLUFFS, IOWA	Some graduating seniors at principal's and teacher's discretion
EAST HARTFORD, CONN.	Graduating seniors in last quarter	DAVENPORT, IOWA	At discretion of teacher and principal
ENFIELD, CONN.	At discretion of principal	DUBUQUE, IOWA	Vocational students
NEW HAVEN, CONN.	At discretion of teacher		
WEST HARTFORD, CONN.	If certain grade average is maintained, at discretion of teacher		

## EXEMPTIONS TO FINAL EXAMINATION REQUIREMENTS FOR SECONDARY SCHOOL PUPILS (Continued)

School system	Exemption	School system	Exemption
<u>6,000-24,999 pupils (Continued)</u>			
SIOUX CITY, IOWA	Seniors; skill classes at discretion of teacher	MIDLAND, MICH.	Graduating seniors, if passing grade is assured; other subjects at discretion of principal
WATERLOO, IOWA	At discretion of principal and teacher	PORT HURON, MICH.	Students with certain grade averages; varies by high school
TOPEKA, KANS.	No details	UTICA, MICH.	Graduating seniors; certain subjects for other students
ACADIA PARISH, LA. (Crowley)	At discretion of principal and staff	WATERFORD TOWNSHIP, MICH. (Pontiac)	Graduating seniors, if passing grade is assured
OUACHITA PARISH, LA. (Monroe)	At discretion of teacher	EDINA, MINN.	At discretion of teacher
ST BERNARD PARISH, LA. (Chalmette)	Students are on continuous progress program; evaluation takes place when student completes course objectives.	MINNETONKA, MINN.	At discretion of teacher
PORTLAND, ME.	Graduating seniors	MOUNDS VIEW SCHOOL DISTRICT, MINN. (St. Paul)	At discretion of principal and staff
CARROLL COUNTY, MD. (Westminster)	Students with "B" average	OSSEO, MINN.	At discretion of teacher
FREDERICK COUNTY, MD. (Frederick)	At discretion of teacher	ROSEVILLE, MINN.	At discretion of teacher
WASHINGTON COUNTY, MD. (Hagerstown)	At discretion of teacher	FERGUSON-FLORISSANT SCHOOL DISTRICT, MO. (Ferguson)	No details
LAWRENCE, MASS.	Seniors with 85 or better average and recommendation of teacher	HAZELWOOD, MO.	Graduating seniors with qualifying grades
LEXINGTON, MASS.	Projects can be substituted for seniors in lieu of exams.	HICKMAN MILLS, MO.	At discretion of teacher
SOMERVILLE, MASS.	Graduating seniors	RAYTOWN, MO.	At discretion of teacher
WELLESLEY, MASS.	In certain subjects	WEBSTER GROVES, MO.	No details
BIRMINGHAM, MICH.	At discretion of teacher	MANCHESTER, N. H.	At discretion of principal and staff
EAST DETROIT, MICH.	Exempted for good attendance	CAMDEN, N. J.	At discretion of staff
GARDEN CITY, MICH.	Students with "B" or better average, at discretion of teacher	CRANFORD, N. J.	Final exams not required of any student
JACKSON, MICH.	Graduating seniors; some discretion by teacher and principal depending on subject matter	EDISON TOWNSHIP, N. J. (Edison)	No details

## EXEMPTIONS TO FINAL EXAMINATION REQUIREMENTS FOR SECONDARY SCHOOL PUPILS (Continued)

School system	Exemption	School system	Exemption
<u>6,000-24,999 pupils (Continued)</u>			
LIVINGSTON, N. J.	Senior exemptions; grade exemptions; departmental options	FAYETTEVILLE, N. C., city schools	Student with certain grade average in a subject
MADISON TOWNSHIP, N. J. (Matawan)	Seniors	ROBESON COUNTY, N. C. (Lumberton)	No details
MIDDLETOWN TOWNSHIP, N. J. (Middletown)	Seniors with passing grades	ROWEN COUNTY, N. C. (Salisbury)	Graduating seniors at discretion of principal and teacher
RIDGEWOOD, N. J.	At discretion of teacher	BEREA, OHIO	At discretion of each school; currently all high schools require final exams.
SOUTH ORANGE-MAPLEWOOD SCHOOL DISTRICT, N. J. (South Orange)	At discretion of department head	CLEVELAND HEIGHTS-UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS SCHOOL DISTRICT, OHIO (Cleveland)	No required final exams for any students
TRENTON, N. J.	Seniors with high enough grades	UPPER ARLINGTON SCHOOL DISTRICT, OHIO (Columbus)	Graduating seniors
WAYNE TOWNSHIP, N. J. (Wayne)	At discretion of teacher if certain grade average is maintained	WARREN, OHIO	Exemption in certain courses dependent on content and length
WESTFIELD, N. J.	In certain academic subjects	WILLOUGHBY-EASTLAKE SCHOOL DISTRICT, OHIO (Willoughby)	At discretion of principal and staff
WILLINGBORO TOWNSHIP, N. J. (Willingboro)	No final examinations are given.	EUGENE, ORE.	At discretion of teacher
GALLUP-MC KINLEY COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT, N. MEX. (Gallup)	Attendance records exempt some students.	SALEM, ORE.	No details
BALDWIN, N. Y.	No universal policy; in certain courses if certain grade average is maintained	ABINGTON, PA.	No details
GREAT NECK, N. Y.	At discretion of teacher	BRISTOL TOWNSHIP, PA. (Bristol)	At discretion of teacher
MASSAPEQUA, N. Y.	Graduating seniors with "B+" average	HAZLETON, PA.	In one senior high school, top 10 graduating seniors
MEPHAM CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT, N. Y. (Merrick)	At discretion of teacher, if certain grade average is maintained in certain subjects	LOWER MERION SCHOOL DISTRICT, PA. (Ardmore)	At discretion of teacher
SACHEM CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT, N. Y. (Holbrook)	At discretion of principal	MT. LEBANON SCHOOL DISTRICT, PA. (Pittsburgh)	Upon recommendation of principal and advisory staff and approval of director of instructional services
SPRING VALLEY, N. Y.	Seniors taking regents course and having 85% average, with recommendation of teacher	NESHAMINY SCHOOL DISTRICT, PA. (Langhorne)	At discretion of teacher, with approval of department chairman
		CRANSTON, R. I.	At discretion of principal, in cooperation with department heads

## EXEMPTIONS TO FINAL EXAMINATION REQUIREMENTS FOR SECONDARY SCHOOL PUPILS (Continued)

School system	Exemption	School system	Exemption
<u>6,000-24,999 pupils (Continued)</u>			
AIKEN COUNTY, S. C. (Aiken)	In two of four areas, as follows: Area I, students in grades 9-12 who maintain certain grade averages in certain subjects; Area IV, graduating seniors with "B" average	LAKE WASHINGTON SCHOOL DISTRICT, WASH. (Kirkland)	At discretion of teacher
KNOX COUNTY, TENN. (Knoxville)	At discretion of principal and teacher	RENTON, WASH.	At discretion of principal, teacher, and department head
SUMNER COUNTY, TENN. (Gallatin)	Graduating seniors with "B+" average, at discretion of principal and teacher	SHORELINE SCHOOL DISTRICT, WASH. (Seattle)	At discretion of principal or teacher, subject to certain requirements
GALVESTON, TEXAS	If certain grade average is maintained	YAKIMA, WASH.	At discretion of teacher
GARLAND, TEXAS	Graduating seniors at discretion of teacher	CABELL COUNTY, W. VA. (Huntington)	At discretion of teacher
GOOSE CREEK SCHOOL DISTRICT, TEXAS (Baytown)	Students with high rate of attendance	APPLETON, WIS.	Students with certain grade average in certain subjects
IRVING, TEXAS	Seniors completing all work for each of six-weeks period with an 85 or better average and no truancies	ELMBROOK SCHOOL DISTRICT, WIS. (Brookfield)	Graduating seniors
KILLEEN, TEXAS	Graduating seniors with 85 average	JANESVILLE, WIS.	At discretion of teacher
OGDEN, UTAH, city schools	No details	KENOSHA, WIS.	At discretion of principal
ALEXANDRIA, VA.	No details	WAUKESHA, WIS.	At discretion of teacher, if certain grade average is maintained in certain subjects
CHESTERFIELD COUNTY, VA. (Chesterfield)	Seniors with a "B" average in a subject	WAUWATOSA, WIS.	Graduating seniors
BELLEVUE, WASH.	At discretion of teacher	<u>3,000-5,999 pupils (22 systems)</u>	
CLOVER PARK SCHOOL DISTRICT, WASH. (Tacoma)	At discretion of principal and teacher, if certain grade average is maintained	MOUNTAIN BROOK, ALA.	Graduating seniors in second semester courses
EVERETT, WASH.	At discretion of teacher	GLENBROOK HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT, ILL. (Glenview)	Final evaluation need not be written exam; may be take-home exam, creative product, oral exam, or other, as appropriate.
KENT, WASH.	At discretion of teacher	HINSDALE, ILL.--Township High School District	"Culminating experiences" required; exams per se not required
		OAK PARK, MICH.	Seniors; grade averages; teacher discretion

## EXEMPTIONS TO FINAL EXAMINATION REQUIREMENTS FOR SECONDARY SCHOOL PUPILS (Continued)

School system	Exemption	School system	Exemption
<u>3,000-5,999 pupils (Continued)</u>			
GLEN ROCK, N. J.	"Comprehensive final evaluations" in place of final exams may be reports, projects, etc.	WESTLAKE, OHIO	In some vocational subjects
NEW PROVIDENCE, N. J.	No details	RADNOR TOWNSHIP, PA. (Wayne)	Seniors with honor grades
RAMSEY, N. J.	Depending upon department, "A" or "B" might exempt student	SPRINGFIELD, PA.	With certain grade average
TENAFLY, N. J.	Exams at discretion of students in certain courses	WHITEFISH BAY, WIS.	Some form of evaluation required, but not limited to examinations
<u>Less than 3,000 pupils (9 systems)</u>			
FAYETTEVILLE-MANLIUS SCHOOL DISTRICT, N.Y. (Manlius)	No details	GLEN RIDGE, N. J.	At discretion of teacher
HEWLETT-WOODMERE SCHOOL DISTRICT, N.Y. (Hewlett)	At discretion of teacher, final project may replace exam	MOUNTAIN LAKES, N. J.	No details
JERICO, N. Y.	No details	PALISADES PARK, N. J.	No details
PELHAM, N. Y.	No details	VERONA, N. Y.	Exception may be granted to seniors with grades not lower than "B" in a subject.
ROCKVILLE CENTRE, N.Y.	Senior students in elective courses with averages over 85, with recommendation of teacher	MANHASSET, N. Y.	In certain subjects
ROSLYN, N. Y.	In certain subjects	OYSTER BAY-EAST NORWICH SCHOOL DISTRICT, N. Y. (Oyster Bay)	No details
WANTAUGH, N. Y.	Seniors in senior electives with "B+" or better average and teacher and parent approval	BEACHWOOD SCHOOL DISTRICT, OHIO (Cleveland)	Teacher has discretion of allowing alternative to final exam.
WESTBURY, N. Y.	In certain subjects, at discretion of principal	MARIEMONT SCHOOL DISTRICT, OHIO (Cincinnati)	Seniors
BAY VILLAGE, OHIO	At discretion of teacher	WYOMING SCHOOL DISTRICT, OHIO (Cincinnati)	Seniors with 90% average in a subject

165 SCHOOL SYSTEMS REQUIRING FINAL EXAMINATIONS FOR ALL STUDENTS IN ALL HIGH SCHOOLS25,000 or more pupils (40 systems)

ANCHORAGE, ALASKA  
 COMPTON, CALIF.  
 FREMONT, CALIF.  
 HACIENDA-LA PUENTE SCHOOL DISTRICT, CALIF.  
 (La Puente)  
 PASADENA, CALIF.

RIVERSIDE, CALIF.  
 SAN JOSE, CALIF.  
 STOCKTON, CALIF.  
 BREVARD COUNTY, FLA. (Titusville)  
 BROWARD COUNTY, FLA. (Ft. Lauderdale)

ESCAMBIA COUNTY, FLA. (Pensacola)  
 HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY, FLA. (Tampa)  
 PALM BEACH COUNTY, FLA. (West Palm Beach)  
 BIBB COUNTY, GA. (Macon)  
 MUSCOGEE COUNTY, GA. (Columbus)

SOUTH BEND, IND.  
 DES MOINES, IOWA  
 WICHITA, KANS.  
 JEFFERSON COUNTY, KY. (Louisville)  
 CADDO PARISH, LA. (Shreveport)

RAPIDES PARISH, LA. (Alexandria)  
 SPRINGFIELD, MASS.  
 DETROIT, MICH.  
 ST. LOUIS, MO.  
 CLARK COUNTY, NEV. (Las Vegas)

NEWARK, N. J.  
 BUFFALO, N. Y.  
 SYRACUSE, N. Y.  
 AKRON, OHIO  
 CLEVELAND, OHIO

TOLEDO, OHIO  
 PITTSBURGH, PA.  
 PROVIDENCE, R. I.  
 GREENVILLE COUNTY, S. C. (Greenville)  
 CORPUS CHRISTI, TEXAS

DALLAS, TEXAS  
 SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS  
 GRANITE SCHOOL DISTRICT, UTAH (Salt Lake City)  
 SEATTLE, WASH.  
 RACINE, WIS.

FREMONT UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT, CALIF.  
 (Sunnyvale)  
 GROSSMONT, CALIF.--Union High School District  
 KERN UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT, CALIF.  
 (Bakersfield)

LOMPOC, CALIF.  
 NAPA VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT, CALIF. (Yount-  
 ville)  
 OXNARD, CALIF.--Union High School District  
 SAN MATEO, CALIF.--Union High School District  
 SANTA CLARA, CALIF.

SOUTH SAN FRANCISCO, CALIF.  
 VENTURA, CALIF.  
 EASTLAKE SCHOOL DISTRICT, COLO. (Denver)  
 FAIRFIELD, CONN.  
 GREENWICH, CONN.

STAMFORD, CONN.  
 WILMINGTON, DEL.  
 BAY COUNTY, FLA. (Panama City)  
 LAKE COUNTY, FLA. (Tavares)  
 GLYNN COUNTY, GA. (Brunswick)

DECATUR, ILL.  
 DOWNERS GROVE, ILL.  
 DUNDEE, ILL.  
 MAINE TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT, ILL.  
 (Park Ridge)  
 SPRINGFIELD, ILL.

BARTHOLOMEW SCHOOL CORPORATION, IND. (Columbus)  
 ST. LANDRY PARISH, LA. (Opelousas)  
 ST. MARY PARISH, LA. (Franklin)  
 ALLEGANY COUNTY, MD. (Cumberland)  
 CHARLES COUNTY, MD. (La Plata)

BROOKLINE, MASS.  
 FALL RIVER, MASS.  
 PITTSFIELD, MASS.  
 QUINCY, MASS.  
 FARMINGTON, MICH.

KALAMAZOO, MICH.  
 PONTIAC, MICH.  
 ROYAL OAK, MICH.  
 SOUTHFIELD, MICH.  
 TAYLOR, MICH.

DULUTH, MINN.  
 WAYZATA, MINN.  
 INDEPENDENCE, MO.  
 NORTH KANSAS CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT, MO. (Kansas  
 City)  
 PARKWAY SCHOOL DISTRICT, MO. (Chesterfield)

PATTONVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT, MO. (Maryland  
 Heights)  
 RITENOUR SCHOOL DISTRICT, MO. (Overland)  
 ST. JOSEPH, MO.  
 UNIVERSITY CITY, MO.  
 BILLINGS, MONT.

6,000-24,999 pupils (104 systems)

ARCADIA, CALIF.  
 AZUSA, CALIF.  
 BALDWIN PARK, CALIF.  
 EL RANCHO SCHOOL DISTRICT, CALIF. (Pico  
 Rivera)  
 FAIRFIELD-SUISUN SCHOOL DISTRICT, CALIF.  
 (Fairfield)  
 FOLSOM-CORDOVA SCHOOL DISTRICT, CALIF.  
 (Folsom)  
 LANA, CALIF.

165 SCHOOL SYSTEMS REQUIRING FINAL EXAMINATIONS FOR ALL STUDENTS IN ALL HIGH SCHOOLS (Continued)6,000-24,999 pupils (Continued)

FAIR LAWN, N. J.  
 HAMILTON TOWNSHIP, N. J. (Trenton)  
 WOODBRIDGE TOWNSHIP, N. J. (Woodbridge)  
 LAS CRUCES, N. MEX.  
 COMMACK, N. Y.

COPIAGUE, N. Y.  
 FARMINGDALE, N. Y.  
 KENMORE, N. Y.  
 MIDDLE COUNTRY SCHOOL DISTRICT, N. Y.  
 (Centereach)  
 NEWBURGH, N. Y.

NIAGARA FALLS, N. Y.  
 PORT WASHINGTON, N. Y.  
 ROME, N. Y.  
 SCHENECTADY, N. Y.  
 SMITHTOWN CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT, N. Y.  
 (St. James)

WHITE PLAINS, N. Y.  
 DURHAM, N. C., city schools  
 NEW HANOVER COUNTY, N. C. (Wilmington)  
 ONSLOW COUNTY, N. C. (Jacksonville)  
 WAYNE COUNTY, N. C. (Wayne)

CANTON, OHIO  
 LORAIN, OHIO  
 SHAKER HEIGHTS, OHIO  
 SOUTH EUCLID-LYNDBURST SCHOOL DISTRICT, OHIO  
 (Cleveland)  
 SPRINGFIELD, OHIO

LAWTON, OKLA.  
 MIDWEST CITY-DEL CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT, OKLA.  
 (Midwest City)  
 BUTLER, PA.  
 ERIE, PA.  
 PENNSBURY SCHOOL DISTRICT, PA. (Fallsington)

READING, PA.  
 WARWICK, R. I.  
 DARLINGTON COUNTY, S. C. (Darlington)  
 FLORENCE, S. C.  
 RAPID CITY, S. DAK.

SIoux FALLS, S. DAK.  
 CHATTANOOGA, TENN., city schools  
 SHELBY COUNTY, TENN. (Memphis)  
 ARLINGTON, TEXAS  
 ECTOR COUNTY, TEXAS (Odessa)

NORTH FOREST SCHOOL DISTRICT, TEXAS (Houston)  
 SOUTH PARK SCHOOL DISTRICT, TEXAS (Beaumont)  
 ARLINGTON, VA.  
 ROANOKE, VA., city schools  
 FEDERAL WAY, WASH.

MERCER COUNTY, W. VA. (Princeton)  
 GREEN BAY, WIS.  
 CASPER, WYO.  
 CHEYENNE, WYO.

3,000-5,999 pupils (10 systems)

BEVERLY HILLS, CALIF.  
 SAN MARINO, CALIF.  
 MUNSTER, IND.  
 BELMONT, MASS.  
 ALLEN PARK, MICH.

KIRKWOOD, MO.  
 RUTHERFORD, N. J.  
 SUMMIT, N. J.  
 ORCHARD PARK, N. Y.  
 ROCKY RIVER, OHIO

Less than 3,000 pupils (11 systems)

HARPER WOODS, MICH.  
 GOLDEN VALLEY, MINN.  
 CLAYTON, MO.  
 CEDAR GROVE, N. J.  
 PARK RIDGE, N. J.

ARDSLEY, N. Y.  
 PLEASANTVILLE, N. Y.  
 PORT JEFFERSON, N. Y.  
 BEXLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT, OHIO (Columbus)  
 INDEPENDENCE, OHIO

SHOREWOOD, WIS.

## SAMPLE POLICIES AND ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS REGARDING EXEMPTIONS FROM FINAL EXAMINATIONS

## ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATION: FINAL EVALUATION ACTIVITY

**Ex.1**

A final evaluation activity (e.g., a written examination, an oral examination, a term paper, an oral presentation, or any other pertinent activity) is required in all courses or mini-courses, at their conclusion. The teacher will involve students in determining the type of final evaluative activity. This activity must be based on the objectives of the course. The final decision rests with the teacher.

The grade for the final evaluative activity is part of the grade for that marking period.

## ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE: SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPALS' PLAN FOR PLACING THE SEMESTER TEST ON AN OPTIONAL BASIS

**Ex.2**

Students will have the option of being exempted from taking semester exams if they are not absent or tardy for more than three days during the semester and have an unmarred discipline record. The following criteria must be followed in order for a student to participate in the plan:

1. A student may not be absent or tardy from any one class for more than three times.
2. If a student is away from school on approved school business, these absences will not be counted in the total of three permitted.
3. If a student is absent from school due to illness, these days will be counted against the total permitted.
4. The three days apply to each individual class. This means that a student may be absent in English class for only two days and be eligible to participate in the plan for English but be absent for four days in mathematics class and not be eligible to participate in the plan.
5. The optional phase of the plan permits a student who is eligible to take the semester exam or he may choose not to take it. However, if he chooses to take the semester exam, the examination grade will be counted in figuring the final grade.
6. This plan, when initiated, will not be retroactive and the total number of absences and tardies will begin at that date.

## ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY: SENIOR EXEMPTION

**Ex.3**

Seniors who are scheduled to graduate may be eligible for exemptions from final examinations at the end of the school year if they meet the following requirements:

1. Must have completed all of their work by the end of each six weeks.
2. Must have an average of 85 or better for the semester's work.
3. Must have no truancies.

## BOARD POLICY: STUDENT AFFAIRS--EXAMINATIONS

**Ex.4**

Evaluation of students' progress is an important part of the teaching process. All students may or may not be required to take examinations in all subjects. Seniors in good standing may be excused from examinations at the end of the school year. The policy does not excuse a senior from mid-year examinations, even though he is completing his program. Examinations shall not be given in advance of the date scheduled. Students who are unable to take the examination as scheduled

(Continued)

## SAMPLE POLICIES AND ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS REGARDING EXEMPTIONS (CONTINUED)

may make an appointment with the teacher to take the examination at a later date--but not at an earlier date. At the end of a course, students who do not take scheduled examinations are to be given incomplete or "F" grades. At the end of the school year, each teacher is to leave with the building principal copies of examinations and instructions for those pupils who were unable to take the examinations. After students report to take examinations, the papers will be forwarded to the teacher for correction and final grading.

If a pupil moves to another community prior to the close of the school year and it is not possible or convenient for the pupil to take the examination at the school after the close of the school year, copies of the examination questions will be forwarded to a school official in the community to which the pupil has moved, with the request that the examinations be administered and returned. The local school will be responsible for grading the papers.

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