

Name of School: _____

Student Name: _____

Grade: _____

My child, _____, will not be taking any of the PARCC/CMAS tests in English Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies, including the upcoming PARCC/CMAS practice tests. Additionally, I do not allow my child to log in, view, or participate in any PARCC/CMAS activities at any time.

Per my parental decision to refuse the tests, my child should not be asked about my refusal to allow participation, should not be pressured to participate, and should not be asked to make up the tests during the make up window.

The decision to refuse this standardized testing is an informed decision that involved researching all the potential outcomes. Additionally, the decision to refuse participation in this testing did not come easily or without much thought and consideration.

I should note that I have come to this decision primarily because of the severe lack of competent and culturally responsive leadership exhibited by our district's superintendent, Dr. Javier Abrego, and Chief Academic Innovation Officer, Aracelia Burgos. Dr. Abrego is a toxic leader who does not represent or respect the interests of the Commerce City community. Dr. Abrego and Aracelia Burgos have consistently demonstrated a lack of knowledge, understanding and willingness to advocate for bilingual students. They may believe in better, but only when it comes to their salary. I refuse to stand by while Dr. Abrego and Aracelia Burgos further dismantle the district's PreK-12 biliteracy program. I refuse to stand by as they try to strip away our children's linguistic and cultural heritage. And I refuse to stand by as they both try to turn our district into an English-only Arizona district. We are NOT Arizona! And my child is NOT participating in PARCC/CMAS!

Finally, I understand that Colorado law requires all students have the opportunity to take the PARCC/CMAS; it is still my decision and right to refuse my child's participation in all the PARCC/CMAS tests.

Parent Signature: _____

Please Print Full Name: _____

Date: _____

cc: Dr. Javier Abrego, Adams 14 Superintendent

cc: Jamie Ball, Adams 14 Assessment Coordinator

OptOut/Refusal FAQ's

Will opting out/refusing state mandated standardized tests hurt me or my child?

- No! Schools may be required to test all students, but there is no law requiring the parents to allow their children to be tested. The Colorado Dept. of Education does not even enforce the law. CDE regulations concerning tests require school districts to test at least "95% of the children." There is no punitive action against the parent or student. It is the responsibility of the School district is to provide information and they must show that they did so and that the parent understood it. It is not meant to imply any negative action against parents or students.

Will opting out/refusing state mandated tests affect the funds my school receives causing teachers to lose their jobs and my school to close down?

- No! This is one of the biggest myth's circulating about the opt out movement! Refusing to allow your child to be tested does not affect a school's funding at all. However, it can affect the school's accreditation.

What does it mean if a school loses its accreditation and what if accreditation loss is only due documented cases of students who opt out/refuse these tests?

- It can't be. There are levels of accreditation and a school will only drop one accreditation level for not reaching the 95% student participation threshold. This is a school threshold, not grade level.

So, if in 2014, 90% of students in a school test, they drop one level that year. Then in 2016, 85% of students in that same school test, we drop another level...am I understanding it correctly?

- No. If your school has a performance rating it would become an "improvement school" or worst case, fall into "turnaround" status. Only if the rating drops to "improvement" and testing is less than 95% would it become a priority improvement school. You would only drop 1 performance level from what the test scores indicate.

What happens to schools that drop to "improvement" or "turnaround" status?

- For individual schools in priority improvement or turnaround status, there is a five-year calendar, and many, many options exist for schools that find themselves in turnaround status. It is a five year process. At the five year mark a school must significantly change its programming, could be taken over by the state, or be closed. Changes are made throughout the entire five years, and include plan of action by the principal, School Advisory Committee, district, and in a

charter school, the governing board. There are requirements for parental engagement meetings, and detailed written plans of action via the Unified Improvement Plan.

So if a school loses accreditation will it affect how much money that school receives from the state?

- No! There are no dollars attached to a school's rating. Dollars are allocated by the state funding formula, on a per pupil basis. Additional dollars only flow with specific needs, and are related more to the number of those students that a district, not a specific school, serve. Funding is NOT tied to a school's Unified Improvement Plan in any way.

If a school does not have at least 95% of its students taking the tests, their rating drops?

- Yes, this is true. If they do not get 95% participation, school rating is affected. This puts parents in a bad position. They either choose what they believe is best for their own child or they choose what is best for the school. The entire opt out movement is based on what a parent thinks is best for his/her child. If enough parents refuse the test, it disables a 'bad' testing and data collection system. It is a difficult position to be in as a parent.

Do I have to meet face to face with my school's principal if I want to opt out/refuse my child?

- No! Parents are NOT required to have a face to face meeting with the principal.

Am I required to sign the DCSD Evidence of Refusal form?

- No! Parents are NOT required to sign the DCSD Evidence of Refusal Form. Just hand in your opt out/refusal letter you can download from this website. Just look for the button underneath the refusal letter!

Do I have to opt out/refuse state mandated tests for my child every school year or is just once enough?

- We recommend and encourage parents to renew their file each year as new tests are being developed and implemented each new school year.

<https://www.angelaengel.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Three-Steps-to-Refusing-the-PARC-C-Test.pdf>

Participation and Parent Excusal

Can parents excuse their children from taking the state tests?

Yes. State law allows parents to excuse their child from state assessments. This law requires districts to have policies that explain how parents may excuse a student from participating in one or more state assessments and notify parents of those policies. Your district can share their specific policy with you.

What are the consequences of excusing your child from participating in the state tests?

According to state law, districts cannot impose negative consequences on students or parents if a parent excuses his or her student from participating in a statewide assessment, including prohibiting school attendance, imposing an unexcused absence, or prohibiting participation in extracurricular activities. Likewise, districts cannot impose unreasonable burdens or requirements on a student to discourage the student from taking an assessment or to encourage the student's parent to excuse his/her child from the assessment.

It is important to note that non-participation in state assessments means parents will not have information about their child's attainment and growth on the state standards compared to other students in their school, district and state. Also, there is a chance that comparisons between schools and districts won't be available as common state assessments are the most consistent way to compare performance right now.

Will my school or district's accreditation rating be impacted by low participation on tests?

Federal law requires 95 percent of students overall, and in each demographic category, to take the required assessments. However, the Colorado State Board of Education passed a motion in February 2015 that says districts will not be held liable for parents choosing to excuse their children from testing.

As a result of these two policies, there is no impact on state accountability determinations for schools or districts that do not meet the federal requirement for 95 percent participation in two or more content areas due to parents excusing their students from testing. If, however, the school or district fails to meet the 95 percent participation rate requirement in two or more content areas for reasons such as students refusing to take the test without a parent excuse, then the school or district's plan type will be lowered one level.

Are there financial impacts on teachers or schools for low participation?

There is no fiscal impact on a district or teacher, at the state level, for parents excusing students from state assessments.

CMAS English Language Arts and Mathematics Assessments

Who developed the new English language arts and mathematics assessments?

The English language arts and math assessments were developed in collaboration with PARCC.

Colorado was a governing member of the PARCC consortia, which allowed Colorado Department of Education staff, along with staff from the Colorado Department of Higher Education and Colorado educators, to collaborate with individuals from across the country to develop common assessments for English language arts and mathematics.

Hundreds of K-12 and postsecondary educators, content specialists and assessment experts from across the PARCC states participated in a thorough review of all items, including about 57 educators from Colorado.

The PARCC consortia is changing to allow states more flexibility in determining their assessments. Colorado is currently working to develop test items just for our own CMAS ELA and math assessments, but while that work is underway, items from the PARCC assessment will continue to be used. Other than some adjustments for test time and getting results back faster, the 2018 assessments will be largely unchanged