

Board File: IK

STATE-MANDATED ASSESSMENTS

The Board of Education respects parents' or legal guardians' right to direct their students' education and honors the choices of parents or guardians make regarding their students' participation in state-mandated assessments. Under Colorado law, all school districts, board of cooperative services, district charter schools and institute charter schools are prohibited from imposing negative consequences for a parent's exercise of his or her choice to excuse a student from state-mandated assessments. In accordance with State law protecting students and parents and in order for families to make their own best choices regarding state-mandated assessments, the Board adopts the following policy.

Information about State-Mandated Assessments

Before classes commence in the fall, the district shall provide to each parent or guardian the schedule of state-mandated assessments to the extent known, including a statement about the purpose and use of the state-mandated assessments. A copy of this policy shall accompany this communication, which shall also be posted on the district's website.

As required by state law, the results of the state-mandated assessments shall be included on the student's final report card, if such results are available in time for inclusion on the final report card. If a parent or guardian has excused the student from taking one or more state-mandated assessments, the final report card shall not indicate in any way that the assessment was excused or not taken.

As soon as practicable after the school district receives a student's state-mandated assessment results but in no event later than the next scheduled parent-teacher conference, the school at which the student is enrolled shall share with and explain to the parent or legal guardian the student's results on the assessments.

Administration of State-Mandated Assessments

The superintendent or designee shall observe all testing protocols relevant to the state-mandated assessments, and shall make proper arrangement for test security.

For computer-based state-mandated assessments, the parent or guardian may request that the assessment be administered using pencil and paper. Such request shall be made in writing, which may be in email form, to the school at which the student is enrolled and at time designated by the superintendent or designee that will allow for the proper arrangements to be made for the student to take the pencil and paper version of the assessment.

Although on-site supervision cannot be guaranteed for students who do not take the state-mandated assessments, schools may use staff and volunteer resources to the best of their abilities to provide on-site supervision if they choose, and make these accommodations known to their parent community through direct communication, parent newsletter and/or school website.

Excusing State-Mandated Assessments

The district shall provide a standardized form to document parent or guardian excuses of administration state-mandated assessments to their student for state compliance purposes, though the parent or guardian shall not be required to use the form to express their desire to excuse the administration of the state-mandated assessments. A parent or guardian's written excuse from state-mandated assessment may apply to all such assessments, or certain assessments as selected by the parent or guardian. Excused absences will be given to all students who have parent or guardian excuses from state-mandated assessments, provided that the parent or guardian has notified the school in writing reasonably in advance of the testing. The student will be marked as excused absent regardless as to whether the student is physically present in the building for alternate activities that individual schools may provide.

This assessment excuse process applies only to state-mandated assessments, and does not apply to teacher, school, or district-chosen (local) tests or assessments. Parent or guardian concerns about these local assessments may be addressed with the classroom teacher and/or building principal.

Prohibited Activities

While schools are expected to comply with applicable law for state-mandated assessments, inappropriate incentives to either encourage or discourage any student from the taking of these assessments are prohibited, including but not limited to: extra recesses; homework "passes"; class parties.

Non-participation in state-mandated assessments shall not be used for class placement guidance or as a prerequisite to participate in any DCSD high school academic classes.

No student, parent or guardian, teacher, building leader or school shall be penalized in any way for a parent or guardian excusing of a student from state-mandated assessments as provided in this policy. Prohibited actions in response to a parent or guardian excusing a student from state assessments include, but are not limited to: denying extracurricular activities to the student and/or parent or guardian; denying continuation to the next grade level; denying participation in graduation ceremonies/advancement activities; being singled out to peers; requiring the parent or guardian to meet with the principal regarding the excuse, unless the written excuse provided by the parent or guardian is unclear, and/or consideration of the number of excused students on a teacher or building leader's evaluation.

Nothing in this policy is to be construed as evidence of an intention on the part of the Board of Education to avoid the laws of the State of Colorado, or rules of the Colorado Department of Education regarding educational accountability for school districts, schools, principals or teachers.

Adopted: June 2, 2015

LEGAL REFS.:

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