

DPS SY 2016/17 PARENT OPT-OUT REQUEST PROCEDURE UPDATE:

ASSESSMENT PARTICIPATION EXEMPTION REQUEST APPLICATION LAUNCH

Assessments provide valuable information for parents on where students stand on the mastery of the standards, and whether or not they are on track to graduate, prepared for the 21st century. While measurement helps ensure that every child receives an equitable education and is on the path to success, DPS recognizes some parents will still object and will want to exempt their children from this important activity. As of Fall 2015, Colorado law (C.R.S. section 22-7-1013(8)) requires districts to implement a written policy by which a student's parent may excuse the student from participating in one or more of the state assessments without imposing negative consequences on the student or parent.

To more comprehensively track these requests, Denver Public Schools has established the ***Assessment Participation Exemption Request Application***, an online application that district parents can access through the DPS Parent Portal. The application is available in multiple languages, including downloadable forms for languages associated with the DPS Consent Decree. While most users will be able to enter in their exemption selections directly into the application, users of the translated hard copy forms downloaded from the application will be required to return the completed form to their child's school by the identified deadline. Similarly, if a family does not have access to the internet, schools are advised to print a hard copy of the form from the application which can also be accessed through IC. Once the form is completed, schools can enter in the data into the application. The school secretary,



school administrator or Site Assessment Leader will then enter in the data on the completed form using Infinite Campus. Application directions and real time reports on the exemption selections can be accessed in Principal Portal.

This application will be available for use starting on September 9 and will close on February 27. While Spring assessments like CMAS will be available for selection once the application opens this year, District supported assessments with yearlong windows, such as ANET¹ and MAP², and thus requires early decisions, will only be available for selection through November 11, 2016. All other assessments will be made available for exemption up to February 27, 2017.

Note that according to state policy, the state assessments that are available for exemption are CMAS and CoAlt English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, PSAT, and the SAT. ACCESS for ELLs, READ Act assessments and TS GOLD are not included in this policy. Moreover, currently, state and federal requirements around testing and parent refusals are not fully aligned. The federal 95 percent participation requirements are still part of federal law.

Finally, local assessment eligibility for opt out are determined by the school leader. Given that local assessments are usually part of the teacher's curriculum and therefore instruction, we do not recommend that local assessments be made eligible for opt out unless it is purchased from a vendor or an outside source; however, the eligibility and the process for collecting this information will be determined by school leaders.

¹ ANET refers to the use of the assessment as a district interim only.

² MAP refers to the use of the assessment in DPS alternative high schools only.