



Assessment information 2016-17

Colorado Measures of Academic Success (CMAS)

The Colorado Measures of Academic Success (CMAS): Science and Social Studies is Colorado's standards-based assessment designed to measure the Colorado Academic Standards (CAS) in the content areas of science and social studies. A very small number of students with significant cognitive disabilities may take the Colorado Alternate Assessment (CoAlt) based on the Extended Evidence Outcomes (EEOs) of the CAS. The CMAS and CoAlt: Science and Social Studies assessments are collaboratively developed by the Colorado Department of Education, the Colorado educator community, and Colorado's science and social studies assessment contractor, Pearson.

Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC)

In compliance with legislation, Colorado joined the PARCC consortia as a governing member in August, 2012. PARCC is a multi-state assessment consortium that is developing shared English language arts (ELA) and mathematics assessments.

PARCC assessments in English Language Arts/Literacy and Mathematics will be administered in grades 3-9 in the 2016-17 school year. Tests at each grade level will be based on the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for that grade level.

States and schools will have up to 30 school days in which to test, but most can complete all testing in a week or two weeks, depending on their schedule and availability of laptops/devices. The single window will extend from approximately 75% mark to the 90% mark of the school year. Social studies: Grades 4, and 7 and 11 (Over the next three years, about one-third of elementary and middle schools will be selected each year to administer social studies assessments). In November, CDE will share with districts their selected schools for this year. To meet the new law's requirement for a three-year sampling plan for social studies tests, these assessments will be administered at zero percent of high schools in 2016, approximately 50 percent of high schools in 2017, and the remaining 50 percent in 2018.) Science will be administered to students in grades 5, 8 and 11.

Aurora Academy will use the results of the PARCC and CMAS assessments as one measure to evaluate whether the school has increased student achievement for all students, and to evaluate the change in the achievement gaps that exist among various groups of students. PARCC and CMAS results will be disaggregated by the following subgroups of students:

- Gender
- Economically Disadvantaged
- Ethnicity
- Students with Disabilities
- Students with limited English proficiency
- Gifted and Talented Students



English Language Proficiency Assessment

The WIDA Consortium is the company that provides the annual summative assessment, ACCESS for ELLs 2.0. This assessment allows educators, students, and families to monitor students' progress in acquiring academic English in the domains of speaking, listening, reading, and writing. The assessment is aligned with the WIDA English Language Development (ELD) Standards.

STAR Early Literacy

STAR Early Literacy provides teachers with a tool to easily monitor student's early literacy and early numeracy skills. STAR Early Literacy assesses forty-one skill sets in ten essential literacy and numeracy domains. The ten domains include alphabetic principal, concept of word, visual discrimination, phonemic awareness, phonics, structural analysis, vocabulary, sentence level comprehension, paragraph level comprehension, and early numeracy.

STAR Early Literacy provides teachers with a tool to easily screen and progress monitor students as they learn to read. STAR Early Literacy allows teachers to set goals and monitor a student's progress as they move throughout the year. It allows them to create an individualized instructional path to build on skills they are proficient in and improve upon their individual skills in which they need intervention. Teachers are also able to use STAR Early Literacy throughout the year quickly and accurately to decide whether they need to change their approach with a particular student or continue doing what they are doing.

STAR Reading/STAR Math

STAR Reading is an online assessment program for students typically in grades K-12. The program uses a combination of the cloze method and traditional reading comprehension passages to assess a student's overall reading achievement. STAR Math is an online adaptive math assessment. Both programs are designed to provide teachers with individual student data quickly and accurately. It typically takes a student 10-15 minutes to complete an assessment and reports are available immediately upon completion. Students will take both STAR Reading and STAR Math four times a year.

PALS (Screener and Diagnostic test)

The Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS) provides a comprehensive assessment of young children's knowledge of the important literacy fundamentals that are predictive of future reading success. PALS assessments are designed to identify students in need of additional reading instruction beyond that provided to typically developing readers. PALS also informs teachers' instruction by providing them with explicit information about their students' knowledge of literacy fundamentals. Mid-year assessment and PALS Quick Checks allow for ongoing student progress monitoring throughout the year.



NNAT

The Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test (NNAT) is a nonverbal test of general ability commonly used to identify gifted children. The questions on the NNAT are composed of shapes and/or symbols, and require few instructions. This assessment is only given to second grade students.

School Readiness Assessment for Kindergarten

Every student entering Kindergarten must be assessed with the Student Readiness Assessment. The assessment has six overarching domains: Physical Well-Being and Motor Development, Social and Emotional Development, Language and Comprehension Development, Literacy and Mathematics. Skills in these areas will be assessed by the classroom teacher throughout the year.

School Assessment Disclosure

In accordance with Colorado State Legislation HB 15-1523, Aurora Academy Administration in discussion with the School Accountability Committee, the School Assessment Coordinator and other staff, along with the Board of Directors, will distribute to parents and post on the web site the decision to use paper and pencil or computers in their assessment options along with an assessment plan and an assessment calendar in order to provide parents with all school assessment information in the Fall semester of each school year. Please reference the yearly assessment plan and/or assessment calendar for this information.

Assessment Excusal

Colorado requires all students enrolled in a public school to participate in state academic assessments as specified in the state law. As of July 2015, new legislation was passed (HB15-1323) that gives parents the right to excuse their child from state-mandated testing.

The accuracy of state accountability data is impacted when students do not participate as well as the ability to track students' progress.

However, students cannot be penalized by the school for not participating in state mandated testing (including, but not limited to, prohibiting school attendance, imposing an unexcused absence or participation in extracurricular activities).



Please note, in accordance with Colorado HB15-1323, Aurora Academy passed the following policy for the 2015-16 school year:

The parent/guardian of a student(s) enrolled in Aurora Academy may request that his or her child be exempt in participating in one or more state assessments. The parent/guardian must fill out the Aurora Academy State Testing Excusal Form and return the form to the front office. The request will be valid for one school year. Requests for excusal from state assessments in subsequent school years will require a new written request. Excusal forms can be obtained from the front office.

Aurora Academy is not required to guarantee supervision for those students that do not take the state-mandated assessments. Administrators of Aurora Academy may use staff and volunteer resources to the best of their ability to provide on-site supervision.

It will be understood that the parent understands the implications of their decision to excuse their student from participating in specific state-mandated testing.

Should you choose to not have your child participate in the state-mandated assessments, you must fill out the State Testing Excusal Form and submit the completed form to the front office. The form can be found on the Aurora Academy website.

Updated July 27, 2016