

Dear Parent or Guardian,

We received a request to opt your child out of state testing this year. Included with this message you will find the **Parent/Guardian Refusal for Student Participation in Statewide Assessments** form. Before completing this form, we encourage you to review how opting out of state testing may impact both your child and BlueSky Charter School.

The results from these tests provide detailed information to your child's teachers that helps guide instruction and improve your child's learning. Teachers and support staff frequently use assessment data to make informed decisions about how best to meet individual student needs. Choosing not to participate in statewide testing limits the availability of this important academic information.

The results also offer insight into your student's academic growth and progress. Test scores serve as a strong indicator of your child's academic achievement and college or career readiness. Current legislation requires Minnesota State Colleges and Universities to utilize MCA reading and mathematics scores as a factor in determining course enrollments. This means your student may be able to bypass placement testing when registering for college-level classes.

Assessment results are a primary measure of BlueSky's overall student performance. Our authorizer and the Minnesota Department of Education use these scores to evaluate the effectiveness of our programming. When students opt out or do not participate in state testing, our results may become invalid due to low overall participation or district wide results that do not accurately reflect BlueSky's student body. Students that opt out of testing are automatically counted as not proficient, having a significant negative impact on BlueSky's performance measures. **These outcomes can affect our ability to meet school-wide goals and may jeopardize our contract with our authorizer, possibly resulting in school closure.**

Ultimately, we want you to make the best decision for your child and hope you find this information helpful. More detailed information regarding state testing can be found at the Minnesota Department of Education's website under: Districts, Schools and Educators > Statewide Testing.

Sincerely,



Daniel Ondich  
Principal/Assistant Director  
BlueSky Online School

## Statewide Assessments:

### Parent/Guardian Participation Guide and Refusal Information

Your student's participation in statewide assessments is important as it allows your school and district to ensure all students have access to a high-quality education. In the past, students with disabilities and English learners were often excluded from statewide assessments. By requiring that all students take statewide assessments, schools and teachers have more information to see how all students are doing. This helps schools to continuously improve the education they provide and to identify groups, grades, or subjects that may need additional support.

#### Assessments Connect to Standards

Statewide assessments are based on the [Minnesota Academic Standards](#) or the [WIDA English Language Development Standards](#). These standards define the knowledge and skills students should be learning in K–12 districts and charter schools. Minnesota prioritizes high-quality education and statewide assessments give educators and leaders an opportunity to evaluate student and school success.

#### Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCA)

MCA and the alternate assessments (Minnesota Test of Academic Skills (MTAS)/Alternate MCA) are the annual assessments in reading, mathematics and science that measure a snapshot of student learning of the Minnesota K–12 Academic Standards.

#### WIDA ACCESS and WIDA Alternate ACCESS for English Learners

The WIDA ACCESS and WIDA Alternate ACCESS are the annual assessments for English learners that provide information about their progress in learning academic English, based on the WIDA English Language Development Standards.

#### Statewide Assessments Help Families and Students

Participating in statewide assessments gives families a snapshot of their student's learning so they can advocate for their success in school. High school students can use MCA results for:

- Postsecondary Enrollment Options (PSEO) in grade 10.
- Course placement at a Minnesota State college or university. If students receive a college-ready score, they may not need to take a remedial, noncredit course for that subject.

English learners who take the WIDA ACCESS or WIDA Alternate ACCESS and meet certain requirements have the opportunity to exit from English learner programs.

#### Taking Statewide Assessments Helps Your Student's School

Statewide assessments provide information to your school and district about how all students are engaging with the content they learn in school. This information helps:

- Educators evaluate their instructional materials.
- Schools and districts identify inequities between groups, explore root causes and implement supports.
- School and district leaders make decisions on how to use money and resources to support all students.

#### Student Participation in Statewide Assessments

Student participation in state and locally required assessments is a parent/guardian choice. If you choose to have your student not participate in a statewide assessment, please provide a reason for your decision on the form on the following page. Contact your student's school to learn more about locally required assessments.

## Consequences of Not Participating in Statewide Assessments

- The student will not receive an individual score. For WIDA ACCESS and WIDA Alternate ACCESS, the student will not have the opportunity to exit their English learner program.
- School and district assessment results will be incomplete, making it more difficult to have an accurate picture of student learning.
- Since all eligible students are included in some calculations even when they do not participate, school and district accountability results are impacted. This may affect the school's ability to be identified for support or recognized for success.

Explore the [Statewide Testing page](#) for more information.

Check with your local school or district to see if there are any additional consequences for not participating.

(education.mn.gov > Students and Families > Programs and Initiatives > Statewide Testing)

### Additional Information

- On average, students spend less than 1% of instructional time taking statewide assessments each year.
- Minnesota statutes limit the total amount of time students can spend taking other district- or school-wide assessments to 11 hours or less each school year, depending on the grade.
- School districts and charter schools are required to publish an assessment calendar on their website by the October 1 each school year. Refer to your district or charter school's website for more information on assessments.

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## Statewide Assessments: Parent/Guardian Decision Not to Participate

By completing this form, you are acknowledging that your student will not participate in statewide assessments and will not receive individual assessment results. This form must be submitted to your student's school or district office prior to testing.

First Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Middle Initial: \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_ Current Grade in School: \_\_\_\_\_ Student ID Number (if known): \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_ District: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Name (print): \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for Refusal: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please indicate the statewide assessment(s) you are opting your student out of this school year:**

Reading MCA/Alternate MCA

Science MCA/Alternate MCA

Mathematics MCA/MTAS

WIDA ACCESS/WIDA Alternate ACCESS

Contact your school or district for more information on how to opt out of local assessments.

(Note: This form is only applicable for the 20\_\_\_\_ to 20\_\_\_\_ school year.)