



HRCS Assessment and Parent Refusal Policy

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish the mode of administration for the yearly state exam, and outline the procedure for a parent's request to excuse their learner from taking state assessments. This policy applies to the parents of High Rockies Community School (HRCS) students.

Definitions

- **Learner Evaluation:** A multi-faceted process for identifying and communicating learner progress. Evaluation occurs before, during, and after specific learning experiences and takes place in an educational setting that prioritizes the needs and well-being of the learner. Multiple evaluation techniques are used to determine the progress of the learners.

State Assessment System

As required by state and federal law, HRCS learners must take standardized assessments in English language arts, math, and science. These assessments are conducted to meet the legal requirements for standardized testing. HRCS will administer standardized state assessments as follows:

- ACCESS for ELLs will be administered annually to English learners in grades K–12 to measure English language proficiency in the areas of listening, speaking, reading, and writing
- CMAS (Colorado Measures of Academic Success) for grades 3rd through 8th in the areas of English Language Arts (ELA), Math, and Science (5th and 8th grade only).

HRCS will distribute an annual assessment calendar to all parents/guardians prior to the start of each school year.

Testing Format

HRCS will administer all state assessments in an online format. For learners with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Section 504 accommodations, the testing format (online or paper-based) will be determined by the IEP or Section 504 team, in accordance with applicable law.

Parent/Guardian Request for Exemption

Parents/guardians have the right to opt their learner out of required state assessments. However, it is important to understand the potential impact of opting out. Our school is authorized by the Colorado Charter School Institute (CSI) and must maintain a participation rate of at least 95% on state assessments to keep our performance accreditation. A lower participation rate could affect our accreditation rating, which may impact the school's ability to attract and retain talented educators, secure grants, and renew our charter.

If a parent/guardian chooses to opt out, they must complete the Opt-Out Form, which is available on the HRCS website under "Forms." The completed form must be delivered in person to the Head of School at least one week before the scheduled assessment. These forms will be collected, maintained, and monitored by the School Assessment Coordinator.

Exemptions apply to the following state assessments:

- CMAS Science, Social Studies, ELA, and Math assessments.
- ACCESS or READ Act assessments are not subject to opt-out requests.

Consequences of Opting Out

In accordance with state law, there will be no negative consequences for learners who are exempted from state-required assessments, including no prohibition from in-school or extracurricular activities. This exemption process applies only to state-mandated assessments. Federal, facilitator, or school-chosen assessments are not covered by this policy. Any concerns regarding these assessments should be directed to the Head of School.

State-Mandated, Federal, and School-Level Assessments

HRCS will distribute an assessment calendar and detailed information about state and other assessments to parents/guardians each fall, prior to the start of classes. The following assessments will be administered to HRCS learners:

Assessment	Population	Window
CMAS	Grades 3-8	April 6-24, 2026
WIDA Screener	Learners qualifying for ELD	First 30 days of the school year
ACCESS for ELLs	Multilingual Learners	January 9 - February 10
DIBELS 8 (Reading)	K-6th Grades	September 15-25, January 12-22, May 11-21
STAR (Reading and Math)	All Grades	September 15-25, January 12-22, May 11-21
NNAT3 (Universal GT Screener)	2nd and 6th Grades	First 60 days of the school year
TS Gold (Kindergarten Readiness- Observational Screener)	Kindergarten	First 30 days of the school year

Classroom Assessment System

At HRCS, classroom assessments align with our academic standards and are used to inform instructional decisions. We emphasize student portfolios as a key tool for documenting and reflecting on progress, with students tracking their own growth over time.

Facilitators guide learners in goal-setting to help them identify strengths and areas for improvement. Small group lessons provide targeted instruction based on ongoing assessments, ensuring personalized support and progress toward mastery. These assessment practices allow for a holistic view of each learner's development, fostering both academic and personal growth.

Legal Reference

C.R.S. § 22-7-1006.3

C.R.S. 22-7-1013