



Assessment Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's)

Assessments – General

How do public schools in DC assess their students?

DC has implemented the PARCC test as their summative assessment. DCPS also uses additional assessments throughout the school year. Information about DCPS assessments can be found [here](#). You can ask your principal or your teacher for more information about the assessments that are used.

What assessments do charter schools use?

Charter schools, like DCPS, implement the PARCC tests as their summative assessment. Charter schools can implement additional assessments throughout the school year. It is best to ask your teacher or principal at your child's charter school to find out what assessments your school uses.

Information about charter school assessments can be found in each LEA's Performance Measurement Framework (PMF) School Quality Report, which can be found [here](#).

What is the PARCC assessment?

Information about the PARCC Assessment can be found [here](#) (PARCC's website) and [here](#) (OSSE's website).

What about assessments for pre-k students?

Information about pre-k standards and assessments can be found [here](#).

Information for approved pre-k assessments for charter schools can be found on page 37 of [this](#) document, or [here](#).

Opting Out

Is there an opt-out policy for assessments? Will I get in trouble for keeping my child out of assessments?

There is currently no opt-out policy. The assessment policy states that "All students enrolled in grades three (3) through eight (8) and grade ten (10) shall participate in the State-wide math and English language arts assessments." Currently, the [assessment policy](#) requires that students take the assessment. There are currently no disciplinary consequences for a student who refuses to take the test.

If I keep my child out of school to opt-out of the assessment, will my child be marked as absent?

Testing days count as instructional days, which means that students not in school will be can be marked absent for the time they are out of school during a PARCC assessment. The attendance policy for LEAs outlines the requirements for excused absences. LEAs can excuse absences under an "emergency or other circumstances approved by an educational institution." Thus, parents who wish to have an absence excused to refuse testing should follow the school's attendance and absence policy. Schools have discretion excusing absences. General attendance



policy can be found [here](#). DCPS attendance policy can be found [here](#). Charter school attendance policy can be found in each charter school's handbook, which can be found on a school's profile by clicking [here](#).

Does my child HAVE to take the PARCC assessments?

There is currently no legislation banning parents from opting out of the assessments, nor is there legislation for an opt-out process. According to the [assessment policy](#), eligible students are required to take any state-wide assessments. A child may be marked as absent for the time the child is out of school during assessments.

Does anything happen to LEAs if I opt-out of testing?

According to [federal policy](#), LEAs are required to assess at least 95% of eligible students or else they may be sanctioned. Sanctions can include but is not limited to less funding, identification as a lower ranking school, or be flagged as a low-participation rate school. There is currently no state level guidance on this policy regarding opting out of the assessments, though there may be in the future.

Why should I not opt-out of tests?

Schools use the information from assessments to see what students know and can do. They may use that assessment data to improve or amend their programming. It also allows you as a parent to understand what your child has learned.

What do I do if I want to opt-out of state-wide assessments?

You should review the attendance policy for your school and make sure that you understand it. You should also ask your school whether the assessment results would be used to decide where your child would be placed in school next year. After you understand how the tests would be used and after you understand the attendance policy, you can make the decision that you feel is best for your child.

When are the PARCC Assessments?

PARCC assessments are given towards the end of the school year. Contact your school's principal for the specific date.

Who can I contact for more information?

Questions about assessments should be directed to your school's teacher or principal. Questions about assessment policy and legislation can be directed to Osse.assessment@dc.gov.



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