



**Division of the Superintendent**  
15701 E. First Ave., Suite 206  
Aurora, CO 80011

Phone – 303-365-7800  
Fax – 303-326-1280  
Web – aurorak12.org

Dear APS Parents and Guardians,

The foundation of our district's strategic plan, *APS 2020: Shaping the Future*, is our community's core beliefs. As we return from winter break and begin the second semester, I would like to reflect on some of these core beliefs:

- Families are our partners in education.
- Students, families, staff and community members share the responsibility for student achievement.
- Students take an active and ongoing responsibility for their learning.

These core beliefs highlight the importance of why our partnership with you is vital in achieving our community's vision that every student shapes a successful future. With this in mind, I would like to remind you that many of our students will participate in state testing this spring. Participation is important because results help students, parents and teachers understand whether students have mastered the content they need to know by the end of the school year to be on track for college and career success. We are asking for your help in preparing our students to do their very best on these upcoming assessments.

Please check individual school calendars for specific assessment schedules.

### **WIDA ACCESS**

Beginning Jan. 14, all English Language Learner (ELL) students will take the WIDA ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 Summative Assessment. WIDA ACCESS measures a student's progress in acquiring academic English. Please note that there is no opt out option for these tests.

Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening (grades K-12, ELL only)

- Jan. 14 – Feb. 15, 2019

### **CMAS**

Colorado's assessment system is called the Colorado Measures of Academic Success (CMAS). In 2009, Colorado implemented more rigorous academic standards known as the Colorado Academic Standards (CAS). The new standards set clear, consistent guidelines for what students should know and be able to do at all grade levels. To accurately measure student mastery of these skills and expectations, Colorado adopted CMAS.

English Language Arts and Math (grades 3-8)

- March 18 – April 26, 2019

Social Studies (samples of grades 4 and 7), Science (grades 5, 8 and 11)

- April 8-26, 2019

## **PSAT and SAT Exams**

APS freshmen and sophomores will take the Colorado PSAT and juniors will take the Colorado SAT. College Board partners use information from these test scores to expand access to various scholarships. We encourage students and parents to explore an online help tool, Khan Academy, to prepare for these tests. Khan Academy gives students free personalized practice, including study and test-taking tips, six official full-length practice tests and a tailored practice plan. Please visit [khanacademy.org](http://khanacademy.org).

PSAT (grades 9-10)

- April 9, 10 or 11 (it is the school's choice)
- Accommodations: April 9-16, 2019
- Make-up testing window: April 10-19, 2019

SAT (grade 11)

- April 9, 2018
- Accommodations: April 9-12, 2019
- Make-up test date: April 23, 2019

## **Participation Guidelines**

While we encourage participation from all students in state assessments, state law allows parents/guardians to excuse their child from taking all state assessments except WIDA ACCESS. If a parent or guardian would like to excuse his or her child from participating in an assessment, the parent/guardian must do so on behalf of the student.

Included with this letter, you will find our assessment guide and a FAQ that contains useful information. I encourage you to read through them carefully.

Thank you for your support in helping every APS student shape a successful future.



Rico Munn  
Superintendent

## 2019 State Testing FAQ

### **Why is it important for students to participate in state assessments?**

While state assessments are only one measure of student learning, having all Colorado students take these exams provides teachers and parents with answers to important questions including:

- Is my child mastering more rigorous grade-level standards? (For reference, Colorado has a series of educational standards known as the Colorado Academic Standards. These standards have raised the bar for students in order to prepare them for college and careers.)
- How well is my child doing on meeting state standards compared to other students?
- Is my child gaining real-world skills like problem-solving and critical thinking?
- What information does my child's teacher need to know to improve classroom instruction?

### **How can I help my child do their best on state assessments?**

Parents and guardians can work with their child's teacher to identify strategies to enrich their education where he or she is already meeting or exceeding grade-level expectations. Likewise, your child's teacher can help identify resources to improve his or her performance where needed. Tutoring, after-school programs or at-home activities may be needed to help students practice their skills. Other helpful tips to prepare for state assessments include:

- Make sure your child is well-rested.
- Provide your child with well-balanced and nutritious meals to help them focus and perform their best.
- Ensure your child arrives at school before the bell rings so that he or she feels more at ease as testing begins.
- Assure your child that test scores are only one indicator of academic progress. Highlight your child's great skills and talents.
- Determine which skills to reinforce at home. The detailed breakdowns of specific skills on your child's score report serve as a great starting point for identifying areas that need improvement.
- Access more information about the Colorado Academic Standards at [cde.state.co.us/communications/resourcesforparents](http://cde.state.co.us/communications/resourcesforparents)

### **Why are ELL students required to take the WIDA ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 Summative Assessment?**

It is a state and federal requirement that all students meet English Language Proficiency standards. ELL students are required to take the WIDA ACCESS assessment to measure their progress toward English proficiency. Please visit the Colorado Department of Education's website for more information: [cde.state.co.us/assessment/ela](http://cde.state.co.us/assessment/ela).

### **What process should parents follow if they choose to opt out their children from the CMAS, PSAT or SAT exams?**

State law allows parents/guardians to excuse their child from taking all state assessments except WIDA ACCESS. Parents/guardians should contact the principal of their child's school to discuss the opt out process. Parents/guardians can then complete a form and return it to the school's principal.

### **What will students who are excused from the exams do at school while other students are testing?**

Schools are not required to provide instruction for students whose parents have opted them out. Students may have to sit in the front office reading a book or use the library to work on homework.

### **Can my child make up the exam if they have to miss school on a testing day?**

APS offers make-up test days for all of the assessments. Please check with your child's school for dates and times.



## AURORA PUBLIC SCHOOLS 2019 ASSESSMENT GUIDE

| PLATFORM  | TEST TYPE                    | CONTENT TESTED  | GRADES TESTED                             | ADMINISTRATION DATES  |
|---|------------------------------|---|---|---|
| <b>*WIDA - ACCESS</b>   | English Language Acquisition | English Proficiency   | All NEP and LEP students in grades K-12th | Jan. 14 – Feb. 15   |
| <b>TS Gold</b>  | School Readiness             | Social-emotional, Physical, Cognitive, Language, Literacy, and Math | Kindergarten                              | Completed by:<br>Feb 1<br>May 23  |
| <b>CMAS English Language Arts and Math</b>                        | State Achievement Test       | English Language Arts and Math                                      | 3rd – 8th                                 | March 18 – April 26   |
| <b>CMAS Social Studies</b>  | State Achievement Test       | Social Studies  | Samples of 4th & 7th                      | April 8 – April 26  |
| <b>CMAS Science</b>   | State Achievement Test       | Science   | 5th, 8th & 11th                           | April 8 – April 26  |
| <b>PALS</b>   | Diagnostic                   | Literacy (READ Act approved)  | Kindergarten                              | April 8 – May 17  |
| <b>CO PSAT</b>  | State Achievement Test       | English Language Arts, and Math                                     | 9th – 10th                                | April 9, 10 or 11<br>(it is the school's choice)<br>April 10 – 19 (make up) |
| <b>CO SAT</b>   | College Entrance Exam        | Reading, Writing, and Math  | 11th                                      | April 9<br>April 23 (make up)   |
| <b>i-Ready</b>  | Diagnostic                   | Math and Reading (READ Act approved)                                | 1st – 8th                                 | May 6 – 17  |
| <b>NWEA MAP</b>   | Diagnostic                   | Math and Reading  | 9th – 10th                                | May 6 – 17  |
| <b>INTERIM ASSESSMENT PLATFORMS (SCHOOLS CHOOSE ONE PLATFORM)</b> |                              |   |   |   |
| <b>i-Ready (Standards Mastery)</b>                                | Interim                      | Math and Reading  | 2nd – 8th                                 | Feb. 19 – 25  |
| <b>Illuminate</b>   | Interim                      | Math and Reading  | 9th – 10th                                | Feb. 19 – 25  |
| <b>Mastery Connect</b>  | Interim                      | Math and Reading  | 6th – 10th                                | Feb. 19 – 25  |

Teachers are also expected to administer periodic classroom assessments such as "end of unit" tests, running records, etc. as needed to inform instruction according to quarterly standards maps.

\*WIDA Screener (K-12th): Testing must take place within 10 days of the first day of school. Students that enroll after the first 30 days of school must be tested within four days.

**For more information about assessments in APS, please visit:**  
[aurorak12.org/testing](http://aurorak12.org/testing) and [assessment.aurorak12.org/assessment-calendars](http://assessment.aurorak12.org/assessment-calendars)