



COMMUNITY EDUCATION COUNCIL DISTRICT 15

Office: 131 Livingston Street, Room 301, Brooklyn, New York 11201

CEC15@schools.nyc.gov | tel. 718-935-4267 | facebook.com/CECD15 | CECD15.org

The Community and Citywide Education Councils (CCECs) are composed of parents who have been elected or appointed to serve as stakeholders of NYC School Community Districts, and specific cohorts of students, representing NYC public school students and their families.

Approved on January 18, 2022, the following resolution offers CEC 15's position regarding parents' right to opt out of mandated assessments:

RESOLUTION ON NEWLY MANDATED ASSESSMENTS: MAP, IREADY, AND ACADIENCE

WHEREAS, in the Summer of 2021, all Department of Education schools were mandated to administer diagnostic academic and social emotional assessments to students from grades K through 10: MAP, iReady, Acadience, and DESSA;

WHEREAS, while these tests may be tailored to assess student acumen, they are neither culturally responsive, nor trauma-informed;

WHEREAS, the test providers have acknowledged that teachers, students, and families will never see the questions or the students' answers because they are proprietary;

WHEREAS, not having access to the actual questions does not help the teacher explain to the student why they may have answered incorrectly, and where helping students understand why they may have gotten a question wrong is pedagogically useful;

WHEREAS, the only information the parent receives from MAP testing is the student's predicted state test score along with a predicted ACT score;

WHEREAS, predictions that are made on a 6th grade student for a college entrance exam can be emotionally harmful and demoralizing;

WHEREAS, most families are unaware of these three new tests;

WHEREAS, parents of students taking the MAP test are led to believe that:

“Teachers can use the score to inform instruction, personalize learning, and monitor the growth of individual students. Principals and administrators can use the scores to see the performance and progress of a grade level, school, or the entire district.”

WHEREAS, MAP reports given to teachers are impractical, demonstrating twenty plus pages of incomprehensible bulleted items;

WHEREAS, like the NYS exams, these MAP tests highlight disparities and divisions caused by many socioeconomic factors and the impact of systemically racist laws that have gone unchanged;

WHEREAS, using teachers’ time on test proctoring rather than actual teaching is not education;

WHEREAS, MAP testing is 3 times a year, and can be 4 hour blocks, so up to 12 hours per year of instruction time can be lost. If a child has time and a half for testing accommodations it's up to 18 hours.

WHEREAS, there are various alternatives to the tests, which can effectively assess student learning, such as project-based assessments;

WHEREAS, the stress of worrying about the impact of a particular score is damaging to children and creates a disincentive for learning and participation;

WHEREAS, teachers need flexibility in what and how they teach to address the trauma students have faced and continue to face during the pandemic;

WHEREAS, in 2015, the New York City Council unanimously passed a Resolution calling on the DOE to amend the Parents’ Bill of Rights and Responsibilities to include information about opting out of high-stakes testing and to distribute that information to parents at the start of each school year, with the assurance that no consequence will come to the student, teacher or school;

WHEREAS, six years later, there is no evidence that the DOE has incorporated this information into the Parents’ Bill of Rights¹;

WHEREAS, the DOE has not created a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document or a Parent’s Right to Opt Out of Testing document regarding these particular assessments;

1

https://www.schools.nyc.gov/docs/default-source/default-document-library/203712013parentsbillofrights_english2146d92204e348c6b76890534fd517ac

WHEREAS, the language used in the existing NYS Test FAQs document suggests that parents talk to their child's Principal about opting out, but does not advise parents that they must opt out in writing;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that CEC15 calls on the DOE to publish and distribute to every parent in the system, including charter families, a revised Parents' Bill of Rights that advises parents of their right to opt out of MAP, iReady, Acadience, DESSA, and other NYS State Exams;

AND, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the DOE will publish and distribute a FAQ sheet, a sample opt out letter, and a fillable form that parents can use to opt out of these assessments and exams, translated into all fourteen languages offered in existing DOE bilingual programs and;

AND, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that information on opting out of assessments such as MAP, iReady, Acadience, and DESSA should be clearly posted on the same web page as the other information on Testing² and be made accessible in all languages;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the DOE add this Parents' Bill of Rights to the New York City Schools Account (NYCSA) so that families can conveniently Opt Out of testing through NYCSA.

This Resolution was approved unanimously at a CEC15 Business Meeting held on January 18, 2022 by a vote of members present including: Camille Casaretti, Antonia Ferraro, Tia Schellstede, Nancy Randall, Nana-Poku Agyekum, Joseph Alexander, Ivan Banda and Alfred De Ingeniis.

² <https://www.schools.nyc.gov/learning/student-journey/grade-by-grade/testing>