

kinda sortas

...or it isn't necessarily so.



1. When kids take CMAS tests, their information goes into a national database.

Student information is highly protected by FERPA (Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act) laws. Access to the information for individual students is highly limited. Only aggregate (combined) data are looked at to learn from trends at school, district, state, and national levels.

2. The tests are a waste of time.

That depends on how you look at it.

- ✓ Is evaluating progress a waste of time?
- ✓ Is having students test their skills and knowledge in a different environment to see what they can do in a different setting worth anything?



Would you like to know more?

1. For more info about the School Performance rating system check out this link:
tinyurl.com/jjt4bx5
2. To read the Colorado Department of Education's Fact Sheet about the CMAS tests, try this:
tinyurl.com/zzkn2nf
3. To see how the tests work and/or prepare your child for testing go here:
tinyurl.com/jgo6btu
4. For more info about how test results for PARCC and the other main test used in the US (Smarter Balanced) are shaking out, look here:
tinyurl.com/gw5mfzb
5. To see a complete overview of assessments available at each grade level in D51 look here:
tinyurl.com/hz52q47



some things

...you may not know about Colorado Measures of Academic Success (CMAS) and Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC)



10 facts

...What are these tests anyway?

1. CMAS = "Colorado Measures of Academic Success."
2. CMAS is the name of the Colorado standardized testing program for 3rd-8th grade students.
3. PARCC = Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers. This is the English Language Art's & Mathematics part of CMAS.
4. PARCC is being used in eleven states.
5. The other part of testing in Colorado covers Science & Social studies (the rest of the CMAS tests). Science at grades 5, 8, & 11; Social studies requirement is based on a random selection process through the State of Colorado for grades 4, 7, and 11.
6. The Science and Social Studies tests are specific to Colorado; no other states are using these exact assessments.
7. The CMAS tests are designed to see how well Colorado students are learning the Colorado Academic Standards.
8. Because the PARCC (ELA & Math) are administered in other states as well, the results of Colorado students can be compared to others in the nation.
9. Colorado had significant input into the design of the PARCC tests, working together with other states to find common goals and ways to measure them.
10. In response to Stakeholder feedback, the State significantly reduced the amount of testing required.



The Good Things

...or look on the bright side!

1. PARCC is a high stakes test being used by several states, making it possible to compare data across many schools and districts in the country.
2. The accountability system for Colorado public schools provides a mechanism to objectively rate school performance in key areas.
3. ...and allows help to be provided to struggling schools.
4. ...and allows parents to research schools where they are considering enrolling their children.
5. ...and makes sure taxpayer money is being spent well.
6. ...and helps districts and schools recognize gaps in their instruction so they can make adjustments.
7. For instance, based on district-wide test results, D51 continues to offer substantial supports to schools and teachers.
8. Standardized testing can point out gaps in an individual student's education, making adjustment possible.
9. Standardized testing can confirm what the parent/teacher already know about a student as an objective measure and help celebrate achievement for a job well done for parent, student and school.



The Myths

...or balderdash!

1. **Since the law was passed allowing parents to "exempt" their kids from state testing, there's no harm done if my kids skip testing.**
Actually, a school district's performance rating (the annual "grade" from the State Department of Education) significantly depends on student test results. If not enough students participate, a school is not rated at all, making it impossible to tell how well it is doing.
2. **These tests don't help my child.**
Actually, we use results from state assessments to help us decide if we're on the right track as a School District. Are certain skills eluding our students? Are some grade levels struggling? When we see areas that need improvement, it helps us focus our efforts to provide resources in those areas. We also utilize this assessment as part of a body of evidence with secondary Math course placement.
3. **The tests are too hard.**
Actually, the tests are deliberately designed to be challenging (but **not** TOO hard). This is the best way to find out what students really know. Testing students on easy material doesn't help

