

Assessments provide valuable information for students, parents and educators on whether students have mastered grade-level content and are on track to graduate prepared for the 21st century. Assessments inform school and district personnel on where to improve curriculum, instruction and leadership in order to better serve your child and ensure that Every Child Succeeds. Denver Public Schools provides detailed information on how assessments are used, which assessments your child will take and when, and district policies for assessments online at [standards.dpsk12.org/assessments](https://standards.dpsk12.org/assessments).



## HOW ASSESSMENTS ARE USED

DPS students participate in both summative and formative assessments.

- **Summative assessments** are generally given once at the end of a period of time (i.e., a unit, semester or school year) to evaluate students' performance against a defined set of content standards. Examples include a midterm or final exam, a final project or a Colorado Measures of Academic Success (CMAS) test.
- **Formative assessment** is a process used by teachers and students during instruction that provides feedback to adjust ongoing teaching and learning to improve students' achievement of intended instructional outcomes. Thus, it is done by the teacher in the classroom for the specific purpose of diagnosing where students are in their learning, where gaps in knowledge and understanding exist, and how to help teachers and students improve student learning.



## WHICH ASSESSMENTS WILL YOUR CHILD TAKE?

DPS publishes a summary level [assessment table](#) and [overviews](#) that detail which tests are required by the state (“state-required”) and which tests parents may choose to opt out of (“state-administered”); the purpose of each assessment; and when assessments are given and how long they should take.

DPS has also prepared [District Assessment Calendars](#); the test overviews include the schedules for specific assessments. Details regarding [state tests](#) are also available.



## DISTRICT POLICIES

DPS administers state assessments online for all students, except for any student who has a documented need for paper-and-pencil testing. In some cases, schools may opt to have an entire grade take all content areas of CMAS and/or CoAlt using paper and pencil. To learn more about when paper-and-pencil testing is used, read the district's [Paper/Pencil Policy for State Assessments](#).

Parents who wish to excuse their student from participating in one or more of the assessments may do so by following the district's parent opt-out policy. The application is available through the [Parent Portal or your child's school](#). Parents are encouraged to discuss the process with their school principal.