

Student Assessments

This notice is intended to notify parents and guardians of students attending school in the Cochrane - Fountain City School District and the public of the state and District-required assessments that are being administered to students in the District. Students with disabilities and English Learners must participate in the required assessments, with appropriate modifications where necessary, or in alternative assessments as deemed necessary or appropriate consistent with legal requirements.

Student Academic Assessments Required by State and Federal Laws

The federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) requires all states to test all students in English language arts and mathematics in grades 3-8 and once in high school, and to test all students in science at least once in grades 3-5, once in grades 6-9, and once in grades 10-12. Wisconsin state statutes also require certain testing in grades 3, 4, 8, 9, 10, and 11, including periodic testing in social studies. The tests that address these state and federal requirements comprise the Wisconsin Student Assessment System (WSAS). The District administers the following WSAS assessments to students in the District:

- The [Wisconsin Forward Exam](#) is administered to students in grades 3-8 in English language arts and mathematics, in grades 4 and 8 in science, and in grades 4, 8, and 10 in social studies. The Forward Exam is a computer-administered, summative assessment which provides information about what students know and what students can do in relation to the Wisconsin State Standards. The assessment includes a variety of different question/item types, including multiple-choice and short-answer questions. Forward Exam results provide valuable information about student performance for individual students, District educators, and other stakeholders.

TIME PERIOD ADMINISTERED: *March – April*

- [ACT Aspire™](#) is administered to students in grades 9 and 10. This summative, online assessment measures what students have learned in the areas of English, reading, mathematics, science and writing. The scores on this assessment are used to predict how a student will perform on both the ACT® and ACT WorkKeys® when they reach 11th grade.

TIME PERIOD ADMINISTERED: *April – May*

- The [ACT® Plus Writing](#) assessment is administered to students in grade 11. This paper and pencil assessment tests students' skills and knowledge in reading, mathematics, English, science and writing. This assessment helps students understand what they need to learn next so they can build rigorous high school course plans and identify career areas that align with their interests. The scores from the administration of the ACT® Plus Writing (if taken with ACT Standard Time or ACT-approved accommodations) can be used by students for a variety of purposes including college admission, scholarships, course placement, and National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) eligibility.

TIME PERIOD ADMINISTERED: *March*

- All students are administered the above-mentioned assessments, with or without accommodations, except students with significant cognitive disabilities who are administered an alternative assessment – the [Dynamic Learning Maps \(DLM\)](#). The DLM is administered to students with significant cognitive disabilities in the subject areas of English language arts and mathematics in grades 3-11, science in grades 4 and 8–11, and social studies in grades 4, 8, and 10. This online assessment is delivered via the computer; however, some students may need their teacher to present the items to them and enter the student's response into the online platform. The DLM system is designed to map a student's learning throughout the year and uses items and

tasks that are embedded in day-to-day instruction. The assessment results give teachers the opportunity to see what students know during the year when teachers still have time to change instruction to better support student learning.

TIME PERIOD ADMINISTERED: *March -April*

School level summary reports of the results of the WSAS academic assessments are available to the public on the Department of Public Instruction's website at [WISEdash Public](#).

Other Student Assessments Required by State and Federal Laws

- **Reading Readiness Assessment**

As required by state law, the District administers a reading readiness assessment (the [Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening - PALS](#)) to students in grades 4-year-old kindergarten through grade 2. PALS is a research-based screening, diagnostic, and progress monitoring tool. District teachers use this screening tool to identify students at risk of developing reading difficulties, diagnose students' knowledge of literacy fundamentals, monitor progress, and plan instruction that targets students' needs. Student data collected from the screening tool provides a direct means of matching literacy instruction to specific literacy needs.

TIME PERIOD ADMINISTERED: October, January, May

- **English Learner Assessments**

As required by state and federal laws, the District administers the following assessments to English Learners in the District:

- The [WIDA Screener](#) is an online test administered to students newly enrolled in the District in grades 1-12 who have been identified through the enrollment process, and in accordance with District procedures, as English Learners. For such newly-enrolled students who are in kindergarten, the District uses [WIDA MODEL for Kindergarten](#) assessment. These English language proficiency “screener” assessments help the District to determine whether or not a child is in need of English language instructional services, and if so, at what level.

TIME PERIOD ADMINISTERED: *Upon enrollment*

- The [ACCESS for ELLs](#)[®] assessment is administered, with or without accommodations, to students in grades K-12 who have been identified as English Learners, including those who receive special education services. This online assessment is administered annually to English Learners to measure English language proficiency and to ensure that they are progressing in achieving full English proficiency. ACCESS for ELLs[®] assessment results: (1) help students and families understand students' current level of English language proficiency along the developmental continuum; (2) serve as one of multiple measures used to determine whether students are prepared to exit English language support programs; (3) generate information that assists in determining whether English Learners have attained the language proficiency needed to participate meaningfully in content area classrooms without program support; (4) provide teachers with information they can subsequently use to enhance instruction and learning in

programs for their English Learners; and, (5) provide the District with information that can be used in evaluating the effectiveness of the District’s English Learner/bilingual programs.

TIME PERIOD ADMINISTERED: December – January

- The [Alternate ACCESS for ELLs™](#) assessment is administered to students in grades 1-12 who are identified as English Learners and have significant cognitive disabilities that prevent their meaningful participation in the ACCESS for ELLs® assessment. The assessment results are used to monitor student progress on an annual basis, establish when English Learners have attained English language proficiency according to state criteria, inform classroom instruction and assessment, and aid in program decision making.

TIME PERIOD ADMINISTERED: December – January

- **High School Civics Test**

As required by state law, the District administers a civics test to high students in grade *[insert applicable grade level]*, which is comprised of 100 questions that are identical to the 100 questions that may be asked of an individual during the process of applying for U.S. citizenship by the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services. Successful completion of this civics test is a requirement for high school graduation in the District. A student may retake the civics test until the student obtains the passing score. For students with disabilities who have an individualized education program (IEP), this requirement shall be modified or waived to the extent provided by the student’s IEP and/or by applicable law.

TIME PERIOD ADMINISTERED: As scheduled by teacher

Student Participation in Assessments and “Opt-Out” Information

Parents and guardians of students attending school in the District may request information regarding student participation in any of the state or District-required assessments, including any parental rights they may have to opt their child out of taking a required assessment, from the *District Assessment Coordinator*. The *District Assessment Coordinator* shall provide the requested information in a timely manner.

Year – Specific Assessment Timelines

To find the specific timeline for each assessment for a particular year, please see the WI DPI Assessment in Wisconsin webpage. <https://dpi.wi.gov/assessment>