

Miller Place Union Free School District

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To Parents and Guardians of Grades 3 through 8 Students,

This year the dates for the administration of the New York State grades 3 through 8 English Language Arts (ELA) and Math assessments are March 29th through 31st and April 26th through 28th respectively. Noted below are a series of frequently asked questions (FAQ's) regarding these assessments, as well as local assessments that are administered by the District. This information is being provided to parents/guardians as a means to clarify the District's policies, procedures and practices.

Why is the District having students in grades 3 through 8 take the New York State Assessments?

All public school districts are required by Education Law to administer these assessments and all students are expected to take the assessments on the dates the state assigns.

What are the 2019 assessment dates for ELA and Math?

The ELA assessments must be administered any two days between March 29th through 31st. The Math assessments must be administered between April 26th through 28th. The three day testing window is determined by the New York State Education Department. Districts may choose which two days to test.

What happens if my child is ill and is not in school during one of the assessment dates?

The State Education Department 2020 make-up dates are scheduled for April 23rd through 27th for the ELA assessments and May 7th through 11th for the Math assessments.

What are the assessments supposed to determine?

The assessments are designed to evaluate student progress and grade level proficiency.

What is the District's position if a parent or guardian does not want their child to participate in the assessment testing?

As noted above, the District is obligated to administer these assessments by the State Education Department. Under current Education Law there is no provision regarding student or parental intent to refuse participation in New York State assessments.

The District does recognize that there are parents who do not want their children to participate in the assessments. The District continues to attempt to balance parental requests concerning assessments within the confines of Education Law and the rules, regulations and guidelines of the State Education Department.

As a parent or guardian who makes the decision to not allow my child to participate in the assessments, what procedure do I need to follow to refuse the assessment?

Currently the State Education Department does not allow a school district to develop a “District procedure” for parents to submit or the District to “accept” refusal letters. That being said, the District recognizes that testing protocols need to be honored, as well as ensuring a smooth administration of the assessments each day for the vast majority of students who will participate in the assessment process. Therefore, there is not a “District procedure.” Parents of students who will be refusing the assessments must state their intention in writing by notifying their child’s Building Principal prior to the assessment date.

What will my child do during the time their classmates are taking the assessment?

Students who refuse assessments will be expected each day to read silently for the duration of the assessment. The District will not provide alternative activities for individual students while the assessment is being administered to the remainder of the class.

How will the District report my child’s assessment refusal to the State Education Department?

Students who do not participate in the assessment will be reported to the State Education Department as “not tested.” Over the past several months parents have also asked questions regarding New York State Regents and local (District administered) exams. The following information is being provided to parents and guardians as a means to clarify the District’s policies, procedures and practices regarding these exams.

What is the District’s position if a parent or guardian does not want their child to participate in New York State Regents Exams?

Students must take and pass the regents exams to obtain credit towards a Regents graduation diploma. Completing the course requirements alone, does not gain the student credit towards a Regents diploma.

Do eighth grade students need to take regents exams?

Yes, if they are enrolled in an accelerated Regents class. There is no exemption or waiver for eighth grade students regarding the Algebra I or Earth Science Regents.

Can parents “opt out” or “refuse” elementary spelling or vocabulary tests?

No. Tests that are administered by teachers are a part of the District curriculum and students are required to take these tests.

Can parents “opt out” or “refuse” classroom tests that are part of the Next Generation Learning Standards Curriculum?

No. Tests that are given by teachers are a part of the District curriculum and students are required to take these tests.

Can parents “opt out” or “refuse” diagnostic or benchmark testing to evaluate student progress, regardless if the testing method is electronic or handwritten?

No. The State Education Department allows testing methods and programs to be determined at the local level, by each individual school district.

The District recognizes that these may be the most common questions parents and guardians may have, but if you have additional questions please feel free to contact your child’s Building Principal.

Sincerely,

Susan G. Craddock, Assistant Superintendent