

Navigating CMAS

A Guide for Cresthill Middle School Families

We respect your right to choose what is best for your child



Your Choice Matters

Our goal is to ensure your decision is fully informed.

- We understand some families consider opting out of the Colorado Measures of Academic Success (CMAS).
- We respect your rights and want to provide complete transparency about the assessment.
- We invite you to explore the purpose, the benefits, and the facts before making a final decision.

Measuring mastery of the Colorado Academic Standards

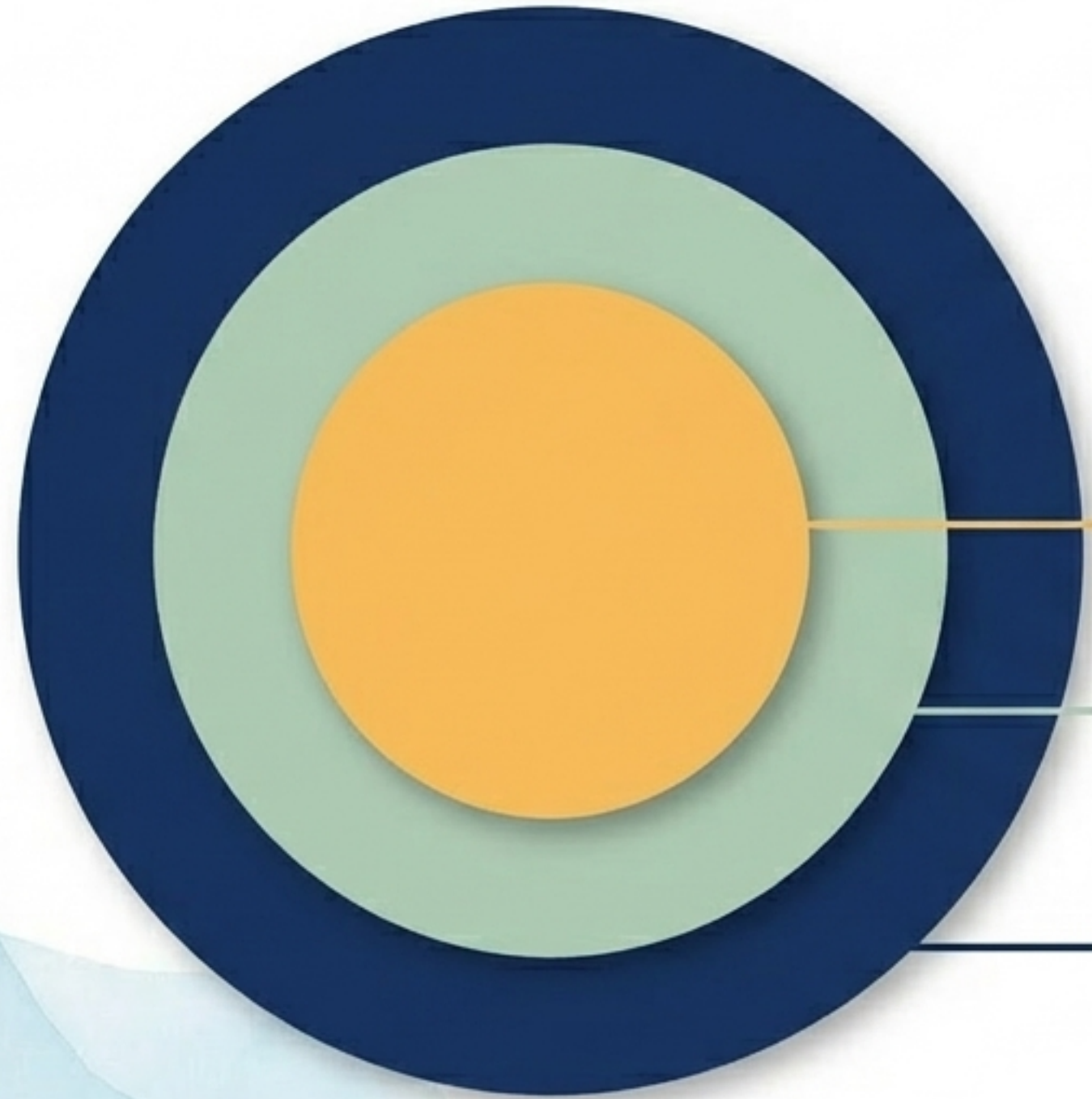


What is CMAS?

A tool to measure real-world skills, not rote memorization.

- **The Blueprint:** Based on the Colorado Academic Standards (objectives across 10 content areas for grades 3–9).
- **The Focus:** Evaluates complex problem-solving and critical thinking.
- **The Goal:** Ensuring students are prepared to succeed in high school, college, and beyond.

The three tiers of assessment value



Who benefits from CMAS data?

The impact expands outward from your child to the entire community.

- **Tier 1:** Individual Student Growth & Placement
- **Tier 2:** Objective Insights for Parents & Teachers
- **Tier 3:** Funding & Programming for Cresthill Middle School

Tier 1: Tracking individual academic growth over time



Personalized Academic Insight

A clear picture of your child's strengths and areas for support.

- **Academic Readiness:** Confirms if a student is on track for advanced coursework.
- **Growth Measurement:** Shows how far they've come, motivating them to set goals for continued improvement.
- **Tailored Instruction:** Helps teachers adapt lessons to meet your child's specific, individual needs.

Tier 1: The vital bridge between middle and high school



Why Middle School Matters

Low-stakes practice today builds high-stakes confidence tomorrow.

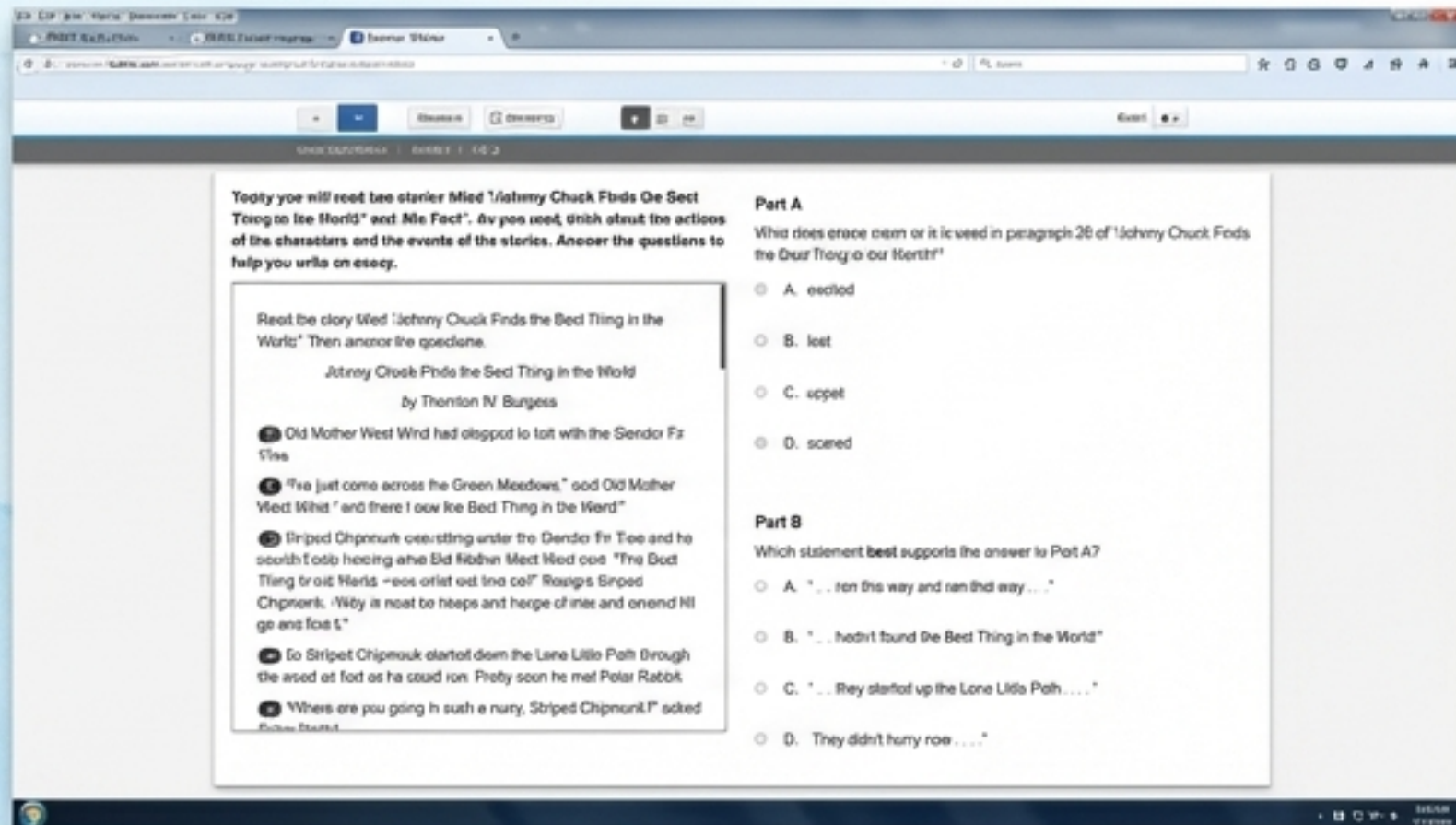
- **Smart Placement:** Results directly inform middle school class placement (support, honors, or Gifted and Talented identification).
- **Essential Life Skills:** Builds time management and critical thinking muscles.
- **SAT Preparation:** Provides a lower-stakes environment to develop test-taking skills before the high school SATs.

Inside the assessment: Testing 21st-century reasoning

Complex Problem-Solving

CMAS measures independent reasoning that regular grades cannot always capture.

- Evaluates critical thinking over memorization.
- Interactive, digital formats mirror real-world technology use.
- Measures skills difficult to track through standard classroom participation alone.



The right rectangular prism shown is made from cubes. Each cube is 1 cubic unit.

What is the volume, in cubic units, of the right rectangular prism?

Enter your answer in the box.

cubic units

Tier 2: Objective progress monitoring for families and educators

“I want my son to graduate high school on time ready for college or a career, and one way to ensure I know that he is on this path is by taking the state exam.”

— Maribel Banuelos

Identifying the Gaps

Grades reflect daily effort; CMAS provides an objective state-wide benchmark.

- Answers critical questions: Did my child meet state standards? How are they doing compared to peers?
- Allows educators to identify achievement gaps and provide targeted help.

Tier 3: Driving funding and programming for our community

>90%



Over 90% Participation

The vast majority of Cresthill students participate, strengthening our entire school.

- Direct Funding: CMAS participation is tied to per-pupil funding.
- Robust Programming: This funding directly supports our electives and core class offerings.
- School Improvement: Aggregated data helps us evaluate our curriculum and continuously improve the quality of education for everyone.

Addressing Concerns: Is there too much testing?



High school students no longer take CMAS English/Math (replaced by PSAT/SAT).



Social studies tests are now only given to a third of students in grades 4, 7, and 11.



Turnaround times are faster, with individual results provided to districts by June.



Fewer Tests, Faster Results

The state legislature has actively decreased testing volume and shortened test lengths.

Addressing Concerns:

Managing test anxiety and preparation



Daily Learning



CMAS Testing

Instruction IS the Preparation

We do not “teach to the test.”

- Because CMAS is aligned to daily Colorado Academic Standards, everyday classroom work is the best preparation.
- Tests should not cause more anxiety than standard classroom exams.
- We intentionally spread students across the school in smaller groups to create a calm, low-stress environment.

Addressing Concerns: Strict data privacy and security



Your Data is Secure

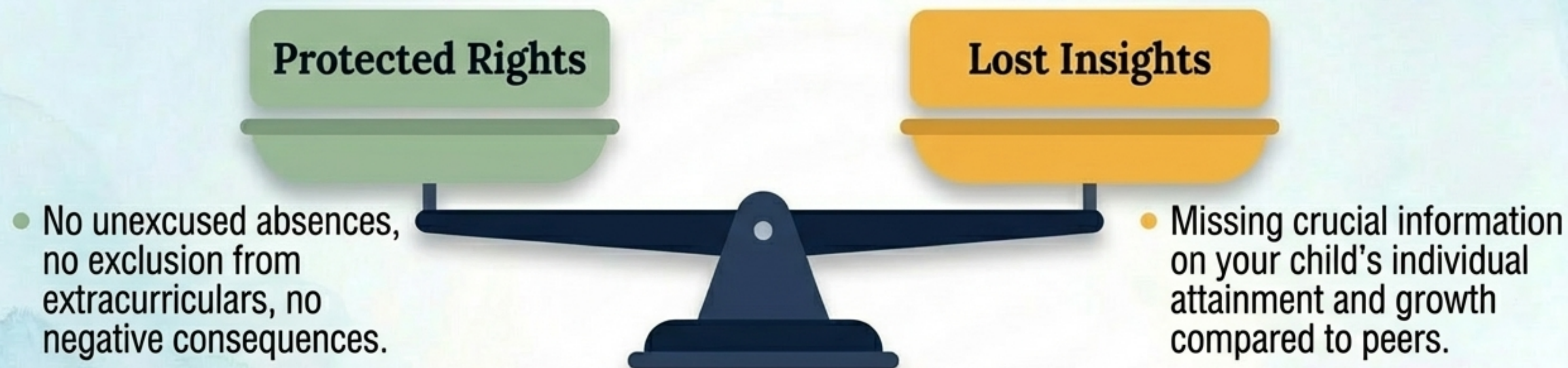
The Colorado Department of Education (CDE) maintains strict protection over student data.

- Comprehensive policies and procedures are in place to ensure individual student data is never compromised.
- Access is restricted to secure portals designed exclusively for parents and educators.

The reality of the excusal process: Understanding the trade-offs

Making an Informed Choice

State law protects your right to excuse your child without penalty.



- **The Impact:** Missing data affects the school's ability to evaluate programs and secure funding.

Let's connect before you make your final decision



Let's Talk

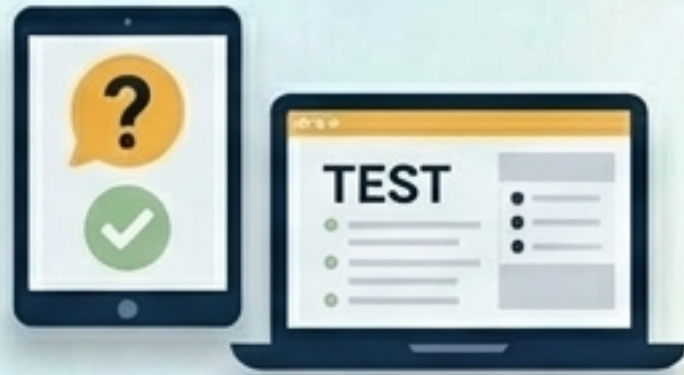
We want to work collaboratively to support the best interests of your child.

- Before opting out, please schedule a brief phone call with our School Assessment Coordinator or an administrator.
- We are here to answer any specific questions about the testing process.
- If you still choose to excuse your child after our meeting, we will immediately provide the necessary opt-out links and forms.

Resources to explore the assessments firsthand

Tools for Families

Familiarize yourself and your child with the test structure.



- Practice Tests: Available in English and Spanish to view question types and digital tools.



- Colorado Department of Education: Detailed guides on the Colorado Academic Standards.



- Data Privacy: Full documentation on CDE security protocols.

Contact the Cresthill Front Office to schedule your assessment questions call.