

ABINGTON SCHOOL DISTRICT  
ABINGTON, PENNSYLVANIA

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SUPERINTENDENT'S  
ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

REGARDING: **Nonparticipation in Selected  
Instruction/State Assessments**

Section: **Curriculum**

Effective Date: January 26, 1993

Reissued: 8/26/08, 8/25/22,  
10/24/24

See Also: Related Board Policy;  
22 Pa. Code: Sections 4.4, 11.7

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**Nonparticipation in Specific Instruction**

The form attached as Exhibit A shall be used for written requests from students or their parents/guardians that the student(s) be excused from specific instruction conflicting with their religious beliefs or other reasons for valid cause shown as determined by the Superintendent or designee.

**Nonparticipation in State Assessments**

Parents and guardians may review state assessments if they believe they may be in conflict with their religious beliefs by making arrangements with the elementary principals, or secondary Coordinator of Student Support Services, Supervisor of Student Services, or the School Assessment Coordinators, once the exams arrive at the school. The Pennsylvania Department of Education Parent Confidentiality Agreement for each assessment must be signed. If, after reviewing the state assessment, the parents/guardians do not want their student to participate in the assessment due to a conflict with their religious beliefs, they must complete the form attached as Exhibit B prior to the beginning of the assessment to request their student be excused from the assessment. This form must be completed for each assessment and each year.

**Process for Nonparticipation in State Assessments**

1. Parent/Guardian contacts the elementary principal, or secondary Coordinator of Student Support Services, Supervisor of Student Services, or the School Assessment Coordinator within two weeks of the Pennsylvania Department of Education predetermined PSSA/Keystone Assessment Window to schedule an assessment review.

A Parent/Guardian may only request a secure assessment review if they believe that they may have an objection to content based upon their religious beliefs. The opt-out request is only in effect for religious reasons and not moral or ethical reasons. If opt-out is not for religious reasons, the test must be marked as parent refusal.

2. Parent/Guardian schedules the secure assessment review (to be held at the student's school) at a time convenient for both parties.

*Things to remember **prior** to review of secure test materials at the school.*

A PSSA or Keystone Exam (KE) trained staff member **must** be present with the Parent/Guardian at all times during the review of secure test materials.

Parent/Guardian must surrender any electronic device(s) over to the District staff member (to be held until secure review has been completed).

Parent/Guardian reviews and signs the Pennsylvania Department of Education Parent Confidentiality Agreement.

Parent/Guardian is not allowed to take any notes during the secure review.

*Things to remember **during** the review of secure test materials at the school:*

Parent/Guardian reviews the assessment (for each content area considering an opt-out). To opt out of all three PSSA's and/or KE's, all three content area assessments **must** be reviewed. A parent/guardian must review current assessments each year for opt-out. The opt-out is not open-ended/ongoing from year to year.

*Things to remember **after** the review of secure test materials at the school.*

Parent/Guardian documents religious objection within a letter and submits to the Superintendent of Schools for approval.

In cases of any disapproval, Superintendent contacts Parent/Guardian providing notification of the determination.

NOTE: Parents/Guardians should be aware that an opt-out will have a negative impact on the student participation rate for district/school federal/state accountability measures.

Exhibit A  
PARENT EXEMPTION FROM INSTRUCTION FORM  
**(FOR STUDENTS UNDER THE AGE OF 18)**

To the Principal:

I request that my child, pursuant to Board Policy "Nonparticipation in Selected Instruction/State Assessments," be excused from the instruction set forth below as that instruction conflicts with my or my child's religious beliefs or for other valid reasons as determined by the Superintendent or designee.

SPECIFIC INSTRUCTION FROM WHICH MY CHILD IS TO BE EXCUSED:

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STATEMENT THAT THE SPECIFIC INSTRUCTION CONFLICTS WITH MY OR MY CHILD'S RELIGIOUS BELIEFS OR OTHER VALID REASONS:

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I understand and acknowledge the following:

1. My child or I may request replacement educational activities. The only permissible educational activity for this purpose shall be in the nature of replacement instruction that is consistent with the goals set for the course and that does not require the provision of any extra District resources.
2. The building principal shall determine where the student shall report during the time the student is excused.
3. All students excused from specific instruction shall be required to achieve the academic standards established by the district as necessary for graduation.

Student's Name (PRINT) \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_  
(For students under the age of eighteen) Date \_\_\_\_\_

Exhibit B  
PARENT EXEMPTION FROM STATE ASSESSMENT FORM  
**(FOR STUDENTS UNDER THE AGE OF 18)**

To the Superintendent of Schools:

I request that my child, pursuant to Board Policy "Nonparticipation in Selected Instruction/State Assessment," be excused from the State Assessment as that assessment conflicts with my or my child's religious beliefs.

State Assessment: \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Name (PRINT) \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_  
(For students under the age of eighteen)

Date \_\_\_\_\_