

Dear Mustang Families,

During the 2018-19 school year Manitou Springs School District will administer two important but different assessments programs:

Our district's main student growth and achievement measure is the ACT/Aspire program. In grades 3 through 8, the Aspire program measures student progress toward success on the high school's SAT suite of assessments and the ACT assessment. These measures will give us nationally normed data on both grade level expectations and progress toward career and college readiness.

The Colorado Measures of Academic Success (CMAS) assessments help the state and the schools evaluate our academic programs. Collective scores for CMAS tests shall be reported to our community in the future, and these scores certainly have the ability to shape public perception about our schools and our community. While we ask that all students participate in CMAS assessments, state law does enable parents to request that their children opt out of state testing.

As a district we value the role that both of these assessments have to guide instruction and measure student growth. While the results of these assessments are only a part of the information that makes up our picture for each student, we do use these scores to make curricular decisions and support your child's individual learning needs.

We have carefully chosen our district assessments and we use that data wisely in our teacher-led groups Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) teams. When we meet as educators this data helps us to assess where we are excelling and identify any gaps in our instruction that need to be addressed.

Teachers and support professionals reference the information from these tests when developing individual learning plans to help students meet or exceed district goals and Colorado State Academic Standards. We believe that student participation in these assessments during their school years helps us better know them as learners and for them to understand their progress as learners.

Details regarding the dates for these assessments can be found on the "news" tab www.mssd14.org/news/ on the MSSD14 website.

If you decide to opt your child out of the CMAS state assessments, please notify the school via email prior to those test dates.

If you have any questions, please contact your child's building principal.