

# **TITLE 1**

# **INFORMATION**

Families' Rights in a Title 1 School  
&  
A Guide to State and District  
Testing



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MINNEAPOLIS  
PUBLIC SCHOOLS



Title I is a federal program that provides money to schools and districts to help us make sure all children have equal access to high-quality education, and to meet our state's educational standards. Title I status is based on the number of students in our school from low income families. Our school is a schoolwide Title I program, which means all our students are able to benefit from the services we provide with our Title I funding. We are required to use Title I funding to improve the educational achievement of all students and engage our families in that process. School staff members work, with input from parents and the community, to develop a School Improvement Plan. The purpose of this plan is to improve our school's entire educational program.

## WHAT ARE YOUR RIGHTS AS A FAMILY MEMBER IN A TITLE I SCHOOL?

We look forward to your involvement in school activities and your child's education. You will receive information throughout the school year to keep you informed about your child's educational progress and the progress the school isn't making toward helping all children meet high educational standards. You will receive invitations to discuss and give input on our School Improvement Plan and family engagement activities. You can find our School Improvement Plan and our Family Involvement Plan on our website.

### AT A TITLE I SCHOOL, YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO:

- Request information about the qualifications of your child's teacher(s) or paraprofessional(s)
- Know how your child's school is rated on its state test scores
- Know any rules for student participation in mandated assessments
- Expect regular communication with your school in your chosen language
- Work with other families and staff to develop a compact between our school and our families
- Help plan how money for family involvement should be spent
- Work with teachers, other families, and the school principal to develop a family involvement plan
- Ask for a meeting with your school principal or your child's teacher at any time

### Requesting information about qualifications of a teacher/paraprofessional:

Our staff are committed to helping your child develop the social, educational, and critical thinking he or she needs to succeed in school and beyond. Our commitment includes making sure that all of our teachers and paraprofessionals are extremely skilled. You have the right to request information about the professional qualifications of your child's teacher(s) or paraprofessional(s). Please send requests to [staffing@mpls.k12.mn.us](mailto:staffing@mpls.k12.mn.us). A paraprofessional provides academic or other support for students under the direct supervision of a teacher. **If you request this information, the district or school will provide you with the following information:**

- If the teacher has met State certification and licensing requirements for the grade levels and subjects for which the teacher provides instruction
- If State certification and licensing requirements have been waived (is not being required at this time) for the teacher, under emergency or other temporary status
- If the teacher is teaching in the field for which they are certified or licensed
- If the teacher has met State-approved or State-recognized certification, licensing, registration, or other comparable requirements. These requirements apply to the professional discipline in which the teacher is working and may include providing English language instruction to English learners, special education or related services to students with disabilities, or both
- If your child is receiving Title I or Special Education services from paraprofessionals, his or her qualifications.

## WHY DO WE TEST STUDENTS?

We test (also called assess) students to answer key questions such as:

- *Are students learning what we intend for them to be learning?*
- *Are all students improving and being appropriately challenged?*

We will not increase student learning by just testing students. The impact of testing students comes in how our teachers use student test results (also called data). Test data is used as part of a reflection about our systems and practices at the classroom level, school level, and district level.

## WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF TESTS WE USE AT MINNEAPOLIS PUBLIC SCHOOLS?

1. **State accountability assessments** are used with all students to determine if students are meeting grade level standards and to monitor systems at a school, district, state, and federal level.
2. **Universal Screeners** are used with all students to determine which students are on track for their grade level and making growth. It can also be used to monitor strategies at a school and district level.
3. **Summative Classroom Assessments** are used with all students to determine if students mastered the skill, learning target, and/or standard that the teacher was targeting. (For example, in class tests, end of chapter tests, etc.)
4. **Diagnostic Assessments** are used with some students who are low performing and students who are not showing growth to identify which particular skills those students need support with.
5. **Progress Monitoring Assessments** are used with some students who are receiving targeted interventions on a regular (weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly) basis to determine if the student is making enough progress as the result of a skill-based intervention. (For example, help with reading.)

6. **Formative Classroom Assessments** are used with all students on a daily basis to reflect on immediate effectiveness of current instruction and determine if students are meeting daily learning targets.

## WHICH TESTS ARE REQUIRED BY THE STATE AND DISTRICT?

**State required tests:** Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment (MCA) or Minnesota Test of Academic Skills (MTAS) (3-8, High School), ACCESS or Alternate ACCESS (for English Learners only), and ACT for All (Grade 10).

**District required tests:** FAST for K-9, Common Language Assessments for English Learners, Istation for K-5 dual language school students, and the CogAT assessment for all students in Grade 2 and students referred in Grades 3, 4, and 5, as well as all students in Grade 5 who have not previously completed the assessment. More information on these assessments can be found on the Minneapolis Public Schools' Assessments webpage (<https://rea.mpls.k12.mn.us/assessments>).

## CAN WE SAY 'NO' TO TESTING?

Families have the right to decline student participation in state and district testing. Families need to request an Opt Out form from their school, fill it out saying which state or district test they do not want their student to take, and return it to school. Forms must be filled out yearly. For more information on saying "no" to testing, please see page 9 for guidance provided by the Minnesota Department of Education.