

*Nonparticipation in Specific Instruction and State Assessments*Definitions

“State assessment” means a valid and reliable measurement of student performance on a set of academic standards as measured by the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment or the Keystone Exams. For purposes of this regulation, locally approved and administered assessments established pursuant to 22 Pa. Code §4.24 are to be treated as state assessments.

“Emancipated minor” means a student under 21 years of age who has chosen to establish a domicile apart from the continued control and support of parents or guardians. It is presumed that all enrolled students are not emancipated absent (1) a request by a student to be considered emancipated for school purposes; and (2) satisfactory evidence that the student meets the legal definition of an “emancipated minor” as set forth above.

Nonparticipation in Specific Instruction

State law requires that public school districts adopt policies and procedures to assure that parents or guardians have the right to have their children excused from specific instruction that conflicts with their religious beliefs, upon receipt by the school entity of a written request from the parents or guardians.

Parents and guardians of District students may review information about the District curriculum if they believe it may be in conflict with their religious beliefs by making arrangements with the Superintendent or designee. Attachment A shall be used for written requests from parents/guardians that their child be excused from specific instruction conflicting with their religious beliefs. The teacher will then assign the student alternate activities of equal merit. The only permissible educational activities for this purpose shall be in the nature of replacement instruction that is consistent with the goals set for the course or the school generally, in the sole discretion of the Principal, and that does not require the provision of any extra Tredyffrin/Easttown School District resources. The Superintendent or designee shall determine where the student shall report during the time the student is excused. All students excused from specific instruction shall be required to achieve the academic standards established by the District as necessary for graduation.

Nonparticipation in State Assessment

The parents or guardians of a student, or the student themselves if they are an emancipated minor, have the right to review a State assessment in the District during convenient hours for parents, guardians or emancipated minors, at least 2 weeks prior to the school’s administration of the assessment, to determine whether a State assessment conflicts with their religious beliefs. If upon inspection of a State assessment parents or guardians find the assessment to be in conflict with their religious beliefs and wish their student to be excused from the assessment, the right of the parents or guardians will not be denied upon written request to the Superintendent that states the objection. The time frame for review may need to be shortened subject to the availability of the assessment.

Parents and guardians of District students may review state assessments if they believe they may be in conflict with their religious beliefs by making arrangements with the Superintendent or designee, 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 attached form (Attachment B) prior to the beginning of the assessment to request their student be excused from the assessment. In the case of Keystone Exams, the student would need to complete the related project-based assessment aligned with the modules for the applicable Keystone Exam(s) in order to graduate.

#### Nonparticipation in Supplemental Instruction or Project-Based Assessment Required for Graduation

A student shall not be permitted to retake any Keystone Exam, or Keystone Exam module, in which the student did not score proficient or above unless the student has participated in a satisfactory manner in the required supplemental instruction offered by the District. Nonparticipation in supplemental instruction for religious reasons would disqualify the student from retaking the Keystone Exam. Furthermore, not participating in supplemental instruction excludes a student from qualifying for a waiver of the graduation requirements. Therefore, a student who does not participate in supplemental instruction must be proficient on the project-based assessment in order to graduate

According to the Pennsylvania Department of Education, “the religious opt-out does not apply to project-based assessments.” See <http://pba.pdesas.org/FAQ>.

Cross Reference: Policy and Administrative Regulation No. 5222, *State Assessments*

Attachment A

PARENT EXEMPTION FROM INSTRUCTION FORM To the Superintendent:

I request that my child, pursuant to Board Policy “Nonparticipation in Specific Instruction and State Assessment Programs,” be excused from the instruction set forth below as that instruction conflicts with my or my child’s religious beliefs.

SPECIFIC INSTRUCTION FROM WHICH MY CHILD IS TO BE EXCUSED:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

STATEMENT THAT THE SPECIFIC INSTRUCTION CONFLICTS WITH MY OR MY CHILD’S RELIGIOUS BELIEFS:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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 or the school generally, in the sole discretion of the Principal, and that does not require the provision of any extra Tredyffrin/Easttown School District resources.
2. The Superintendent or designee 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 \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**NONPARTICIPATION IN STATE ASSESSMENTS FORM**  
**(FOR STUDENTS UNDER THE AGE OF 18)**

To the Superintendent:

I request that my child, pursuant to Board Policy Nonparticipation in Specific Instruction and State Assessments, be excused from the State Assessment Program as that program conflicts with my or my child's religious beliefs.

Name of the State Assessment \_\_\_\_\_

Date of administration of State Assessment \_\_\_\_\_

Student's name (print) \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian signature \_\_\_\_\_(for students under the age of eighteen)

Date \_\_\_\_\_