

**RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION
OF
DOUGLAS COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT RE-1
REGARDING STATE-MANDATED TESTING**

WHEREAS, Colorado is a local control state, where local school boards are constitutionally granted broad discretion in setting curriculum and standards for their students; and

WHEREAS, Douglas County School District has used that broad local control to pursue world-class education innovations and the most rigorous academic standards anywhere - innovations and standards that will prepare our students for the demands of the 21st Century workplace and global economy; and

WHEREAS, the Douglas County School District is committed to full accountability in measuring the outcomes it produces in terms of student success, so long as those measurements meaningfully assess the skills, knowledge and attributes that students in the 21st Century need to be prepared for the college and career of their choice and to be good citizens; and

WHEREAS, the Douglas County School District believes that it is in the best position to design authentic assessments that will provide valuable feedback to students and aid educators in determining student progress; and

WHEREAS, the State of Colorado has enacted legislation which mandates that students be tested in a particular manner, using only those instruments approved by the State; and

WHEREAS, many of the tests mandated by the State of Colorado deprive students and educators of substantial instructional time and do not provide actionable data; and

WHEREAS, one of the tests mandated by the State for use in 2015 is one produced by the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (“PARCC”), which requires school districts to have available specific technology for its administration, but there has been no funding for districts to purchase the needed technology, financially impacting urban, suburban and rural districts alike; and

WHEREAS, the PARCC assessment is being advanced by the same consortium of proponents of the “one size fits all” approach to American education that has brought the low-level “Common Core” standards, namely those institutions who create tests; and

WHEREAS, the District leadership team has reviewed PARCC and has determined that, while the performance portions of it represents an improvement over prior state-mandated assessments, overall it does not represent a significant step forward in measuring 21st Century skills and attributes that students need to be college, career and citizenship ready, and

WHEREAS, the Board of Education is aware that what gets measured in schools is what gets taught, and the measurements in instruments such as PARCC, (like the “Common Core” on which it is based), represent a lower level of skills and knowledge than what the students of Douglas County require and deserve in order to be the leaders in the 21st Century that we know and believe they will be; and

WHEREAS, when tests measure the lower levels of knowledge (such as PARCC), are used as the main benchmark for publicly ranking and sorting students, schools and districts, it sends the wrong message to our students, teachers and the community that these are the most important outcomes we desire for our students; and

WHEREAS, the READ Act passed in 2013, requires even more assessment of all elementary school students, even if the student is demonstrating reading proficiency. These additional unfunded assessments take more valuable instructional time and classroom technology resources from students and schools; and

WHEREAS, the District's leadership team, working in collaboration with its teachers, has been developing assessments consistent with the more rigorous expectations it has for its students as reflected in our Guaranteed and Viable Curriculum (GVCs) that will best prepare our students for the college or career of their choice in the 21st Century; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Education strongly believes its commitment to full and public accountability for the outcomes it produces for our students can be best accomplished using assessments and instruments more appropriately linked to the GVCs that directly address those critical 21st Century skills; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Education and District leadership are actively advancing legislation which would provide school districts in Colorado an option to be fully accountable for creating quality, local assessments that measure what matters most for our students, and reporting those results to community. The legislation would also recognize a parent’s right to exempt their students from the statewide standardized tests without risk of a penalty to the student, teacher, school or district;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Douglas County School District Board of Education hereby expresses its opposition to state and federal mandates generally and specifically those that attempt to measure educational achievement well below the standards we have set for our students, and what we know will be necessary to compete in the 21st Century.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Douglas County Board of Education expresses its opposition to the mandated PARCC assessments and other similar state and federally mandated assessments, because the Douglas County School District's standards as reflected in the District’s GVCs are more rigorous, more demanding, more thorough, and reflect higher expectations and aspirations for our students than any national standard now in existence, including the Common Core Standards which PARCC is designed to measure.

Adopted this _____ day of _____ 2014, by a vote of _____.

DOUGLAS COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT RE-1

By: _____
Kevin P. Larsen, President
Board of Education

ATTEST:

By: _____
Secretary, Board of Education