

Letter of Assertion to Opt Out and Refuse the AZMerit Test

Dear Principal _____ and Superintendent _____,

I do not want my child, _____, to take the AZMerit test, or any other tests based on the CCSS. I oppose having my child's range of intellectual and emotional qualities measured by standardized tests. I am dissatisfied with these tests because they don't measure meaningful learning, they create inappropriate pressures on children, they create counterproductive rivalry among schools, they're responsible for less engaging education because teachers feel compelled to raise the scores by "teaching to the test" and finally, better forms of assessment are available, such as portfolio assessments.

I also object on moral grounds to standardized tests contributing to discrimination, increasing pupil alienation, and spurring unsuccessful students to drop out. I find standardized testing socially unconscionable – leading to gate keeping and perpetuating social segregation. In addition, I object to the personally identifiable data collection that will be obtained on my child via the AZMerit test and stored in the State Wide Longitudinal Data Systems and managed through the U.S. Department of Education and distributed among companies and organizations who have taken part in the development and implementation of the CCSS and related assessments. Data collected on my child, without my permission, is in violation of the 4th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution.

As a concerned parent with the responsibility and right to be involved in the academic training of my child (Arizona Revised Statute 15-102), it is within my legal and moral right to opt out of standardized testing and insist upon better ways of evaluating my child's understanding of ideas.

I request useful assessments which advance fairness, accuracy, quality, and equity: evaluations such as the Learning Record (analysis of students' learning over time by a teacher who knows them well), work sampling over time, structured and informal observations and interviews, performance and exhibitions, audio and videotapes, portfolio and journal assessments, and evaluation including input from teachers, students, parents, counselors, and principals. I am also against any tests, where graded results are not given to the students so that they may see their mistakes and learn from them.

I would ask that the school please provide an alternative activity for my child during administrative sessions of testing (not makeup tests, as my child will be in his/her regular classroom environment during makeup test). However, I understand that an alternative activity is not required on the part of the school. If you are unable to provide an alternative activity for my child, I would ask that you please allow my child to read silently. I am reserving the option of removing my child from school during the test administration session depending on the emotional anxiety of my child on the day of refusal and whether or not the school will provide appropriate alternate activities for my child.

Thank you very much. I am looking forward to the remainder of the school year.

Signature of parent/guardian

Date