

ASSESSMENT VOTING FOR 2020-2021 School Year

Standardized testing has been cancelled this spring because of Covid-19. Now is the time to push for cancellation of these tests, period. We do not need weeks and weeks of standardized testing at every level to rank, sort and label our students and their schools and to add stress to the already stressed lives of our students and educators. Instead, let teachers teach and assess in ways that gives us the feedback we need to guide and help our students learn and grow. The Covid-19 crisis has made it clearer than ever that we have no need for high stakes standardized tests. We need assessment that gives educators the necessary feedback on student learning, to adjust their instruction and other work, period.

While over-testing is harmful in 'normal' situations; it's even more damaging in the current crisis where many of our students don't even have access to remote learning. CPS should **not** be proposing additional burdensome testing now. Sensitivity to our students' needs is critical! This is our Union's position. That said, we are required to hold assessment votes this school year.

Details and dates for the voting procedure are listed in bullets on the next page. *As you make your decisions, please keep in mind our current situation and the uncertainties awaiting us and our students in the fall.*

- We don't know what form schooling will take in the fall: in-school, hybrid, or entirely remote.
- Many of our students will continue to have connectivity issues and environments where it is difficult if not impossible to work and focus.
- Many have been through and will continue to face traumatic situations such as loss of family income, home, and loved ones resulting in increased PTSD and attendance issues.
- Teaching and learning may be interrupted in the fall and winter due to further outbreaks of Covid-19.

We strongly urge CTU members to actively organize against voting to add optional tests during this global crisis. We urge you to use the wins in our contract, which allow us this input on our testing schedules, to stop the proliferation of non-mandatory tests and push for even further rollback of testing policies. Principals and network chiefs may attempt to pressure you but, this is a secret ballot vote and you should not be afraid to do what is right for our students.

The principal should meet with the PPC and also hold a virtual meeting with the full faculty. They principal should make a proposal for discussion and be open to changes based on teacher input. If members have concerns, the PPC should bring the proposal to a virtual Union meeting for members to freely discuss. If members really want to do add an optional assessment to a particular subject or grade band, the PPC can propose, by its unanimous vote, a vote on a particular test to be given by that specific sub-group.

Again, let's keep in mind that the year ahead will not be a 'normal' year. *Before voting to add any optional tests, please ask yourself how the added pressure of more tests will affect your students.* Our answer is that any additional testing burden beyond those tests mandated by ISBE will only exacerbate the harm our students are facing during this pandemic.

If you'd like to be part the CTU Testing Committee, please email staff liaison Carol Caref at carolcaref@ctulocal1.org. You can also go online to www.ctulocal1.org/committees and fill out the request to join the committee.

Calendar for Assessment Action

- Now until 6/3/20: Principals prepare draft plans in consultation with PPC and teachers
- 6/3/20: Deadline for principals to send draft schedule to the teachers for review prior to vote.
- 6/10: Deadline for teachers to vote on proposed plans
- 6/10 - 6/18: Schools whose plans pass submit the SY21 assessment implementation survey; schools whose plans do not pass work with Chiefs and/or Assessment team to conduct virtual meeting with staff to devise an alternative plan and then submit SY21 assessment implementation survey. If an alternative assessment plan cannot be agreed upon, either side may submit the issue to strategic bargaining for resolution.