

Sankofa Freedom Academy Charter School

PSSA/Keystone Parental Opt Out Procedures

Parents are permitted to “opt their children out” of state and federal testing. There is a process. Parents must ask to review the tests. After the review the parents must write a letter asking to opt their child out for “religious reasons.”

How to request an exemption from PSSA/Keystone testing:

- 1) Visit the school to review the test material.
- 2) If requested, sign a confidentiality agreement not to reveal test contents.
- 3) 3) Give the school a letter addressed to the Superintendent (Dr. Ayesha Imani) informing her that your child is exempt from taking the test because it is in conflict with your religious beliefs. The letter can also be dropped off at the District office.

Sample letter: Under Pennsylvania Code Title 22 Chapter 4, section 4(d)(3), I am informing the school district that my child is exempted from PSSA/Keystone testing on religious grounds.

That is all you have to say. You cannot, under law, be questioned about your beliefs or be denied the exemption.

Section 4.4 of Chapter 4 of the State Board of Education regulations provides for the right of any parents or guardians to excuse their child from the state assessment if, upon inspection of the testing materials, they find the assessment to be in conflict with their religious beliefs. This is the only basis for a parent or guardian to excuse his or her child from the statewide assessments.

Two weeks prior to each testing window, each assessment must be made available for review by parents and guardians. The assessment must be reviewed on school district property and district personnel must be present at all times. Districts must provide a convenient time for the review. This may include an evening review time, if requested. Proper security and confidentiality of the assessment must be maintained at all times throughout the review process. District personnel may remove the prompt seals writing booklet to facilitate a review of the writing assessment.

Parents and guardians must sign the Parent Confidentiality Agreement. A copy of this should be locally maintained. (Do not send this statement to PDE or DRC.) Parents and guardians may not photocopy, write down, or in any other manner record any portion of the assessments, including directions. The Parent Confidentiality Agreement can be found below.

If after reviewing the test parents/guardians find the test to be in conflict with their religious belief and wish their student(s) to be excused from the test, the parents/guardians must provide a written request that states the objection to the Superintendent (Dr. Ayesha Imani).

If the student is excused from the assessment due to parental or guardian request, school personnel must provide an alternative learning environment for the student during the assessment and complete the Non-Assessed Students grid by selecting “Student had a parental request for exclusion from the assessment.”