Dear Parents and Guardians:

At a Somerset Academy of Las Vegas Board meeting held on Tuesday, October 16, 2018, the Board approved the Somerset Academy of Las Vegas: No Opt Out assessment policy.

The Board members know that all Somerset students deserve an education that prepares them to thrive in a global economy and civic life. The Board holds schools accountable for delivering on this promise in two ways: (1) by defining and delivering challenging academic content that students must learn; and (2) participating in annual testing to see if students learn that content.

The following is the newly adopted Somerset Academy of Las Vegas: No Opt Out policy:

Accountability of student achievement is the primary mission at Somerset Academy of Las Vegas. Assessments assist Somerset in determining student mastery of Nevada Academic Content Standards and assist in determining whether students are equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills they need to be successful in college and career. Therefore, every child enrolled at Somerset Academy of Las Vegas will participate in academic assessments.

Somerset Academy does not recognize parent opt out or parent/student refusal to test. If a parent keeps his/her child home during mandatory testing, the school will respond as it would with any situation where a parent keeps a child out of school utilizing the progressive attendance policy and the test will be made up upon the student’s return to school. If a student is at school and refuses to take the assessment, the student will be referred to administration for insubordination and progressive discipline for the student's refusal to participate in the assessment will be applied. Aligned with the Somerset Academy Progressive Discipline Policy, school administrators may also choose to not allow participation in after school activities such as clubs, athletics, and on field trips for students who refuse to participate in statewide assessments.

To see how well students are learning, Somerset uses the following assessments:

- Grades K-11—ELA and Mathematics: MAP (Measure of Academic Progress)
- Grades 3-8—ELA and Mathematics: SBAC - Smarter Balanced
- Grade 11—ELA and Mathematics: ACT (also usable for college)
- Grades 5, 8, and 10—Science: State Science Accountability Assessment

Think of assessments like academic checkups. They help teachers and parents see where students are compared with where they need to be. The results can reveal areas where students excel and where they need help.

Somerset Academy takes exceptional measures to follow test security protocol by ensuring that all teachers and administrators go through state-mandated training on administering assessments. In addition, all assessments are taken on computers. Computer testing enables assessment of more complex skills in less time. It also provides more supports for students with disabilities.

To find resources for parents and guardians, including ways to help your child at home, please visit your Somerset campus website. For more information about the statewide testing in Nevada, please visit http://www.doe.nv.gov/Assessments/
Measuring student success against national standards is vital for preparing our students to meet the demands of college and career. Our teachers and administrators are committed to supporting students with great instruction and resources to meet these expectations.

Sincerely,

John Barlow
Executive Director
Somerset Academy of Las Vegas