

April 10, 2017

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Beginning April 11, 2017, the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) will administer for the third year the Michigan Student Test of Educational Progress (M-STEP) to students in Grades 3-8. Like last year, the M-STEP will be given to all students and will measure current student knowledge of Michigan’s high academic standards in English language arts (ELA), mathematics, science, and social studies.

Michigan’s assessment vision calls for the tests outlined above to remain in place during the 2017-18 school year. This vision, available at www.michigan.gov/essa, is designed to promote the goal to become a Top 10 education state within 10 years. Michigan Department of Education staff are working to put that assessment vision into place for the 2018-19 school year.

We want your child’s state assessment experience to be as relaxed and stress-free as possible. Your positive outlook and supportive manner going into these assessments will also influence your child’s experience.

Remember, testing is a part of learning. State assessment results do not impact student grades. They are designed to provide information on student knowledge and ability in relation to state grade-level content standards that identify what educators and employers believe students need to know and be able to do to be career- and college-ready upon graduation. Schools and district use the results for curriculum planning and school improvement initiatives that benefit all students.

State assessment results also are the only measure universal to all Michigan students and provide an important snapshot of student achievement at a state, district, and building level.

We care deeply that students graduate ready to succeed in college or the workplace. State tests allow us to measure student progress in learning Michigan’s high academic standards and assess how well schools are teaching these standards in classrooms across the state. While we support parents in making choices for their children, there is no allowable way in state or federal law to “opt out” of state assessments. Students who are not assessed will count against their schools' participation rate, leaving schools open to penalties.

**STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION**

JOHN C. AUSTIN – PRESIDENT • CASANDRA E. ULBRICH – VICE PRESIDENT

MICHELLE FECTEAU – SECRETARY • PAMELA PUGH – TREASURER

LUPE RAMOS-MONTIGNY – NASBE DELEGATE • KATHLEEN N. STRAUS

EILEEN LAPPIN WEISER • RICHARD ZEILE

608 WEST ALLEGAN STREET • P.O. BOX 30008 • LANSING, MICHIGAN 48909

www.michigan.gov/mde • 517-373-3324

The M-STEP web page at www.michigan.gov/mstep includes more helpful information for families. There, you will find *Student Testing: What Parents Can Do to Help Prepare;* and *Michigan’s Education Assessment System, What it is, What it Means and What it Offers* (complete with our Spring 2017 testing schedule).

In order for you to better understand and prepare your child for the M-STEP, here are some things you might like to know:

**What tests will students take?**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Grade Assessed** | **Content Assessed** |
| 3rd Grade | Mathematics, English Language Arts (ELA) |
| 4th Grade | ELA, Mathematics, Science |
| 5th Grade | ELA, Mathematics, Social Studies |
| 6th Grade | ELA, Mathematics |
| 7th Grade | ELA, Mathematics, Science |
| 8th Grade | ELA, Mathematics, Social Studies |

Sincerely,

Afrin F. Alavi/Principal

| **April 2017** |
| --- |
| **Mon** | **Tue** | **Wed** | **Thu** | **Fri** |
| 10 | 11  5th & 8th  ELA Day 1 | 12  5th & 8th  ELA Day 2 | 13  5th & 8th  ELA Day 3 | 14  NO SCHOOL |
| 17 | 18  5th & 8th  Math Day 1 | 19  5th & 8th  Math Day 2 | 20  5th & 8th  Social Studies | 21    ½ Day |