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March 27, 2018

Dear Parent/Guardian:


In a few weeks, the New York State Grades 3-8 English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics Assessments will be administered to our students. The ELA will be given on two consecutive school days, April 11th and 12th, and the math on two consecutive school days, May 1st and 2nd. As these dates approach us, I would like to bring your attention to some of the changes that have been made to the assessments over the last few years. Below you will find a summary of these changes.

- **Two testing days per subject.** The 2018 Grades 3–8 ELA and Math Tests have been reduced from three test sessions per subject to only two sessions per subject this year, meaning each subject will have two days of testing instead of three. With fewer test sessions, each test will have fewer questions than in recent years.
- **The tests continue to be untimed so students who are still working on their exams will be allowed to continue to work, within the confines of the regular school day.** Students who finish may be permitted to hand in their test materials and leave the room.
- **Test questions reviewed and written by New York State Teachers.** According to the State Education Department, New York State educators were involved in creating and reviewing questions for 2018 Grades 3-8 ELA and Math Tests and selecting the questions for the test forms.
- **Student performance on the 2018 Grades 3-8 ELA and Mathematics Tests will have no employment-related consequences for teacher and principal evaluations.** In December 2015, the Board of Regents approved a moratorium on using student scores on these exams for educators' consequential evaluation scores. This means no teachers or principals in New York State public schools will be affected by the results of the 2018 Grades 3-8 ELA and Math Tests.

We encourage all our students to take the assessments as we believe they serve as a diagnostic measure of our students' learning and progress toward grade level expectations. We will also respect parental choice to have their child(ren) refuse to participate in the assessment process. If your child will refuse participation in the upcoming assessments, please communicate your decision in writing to your child's principal. This will allow our principals to plan accordingly and ensure smooth learning environment for all our students.

Thank you for your anticipated cooperation. If you have any questions or concerns please contact your child's principal.

Sincerely,


Joseph Giani, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools