



March 16, 2009

Dear Parents and Guardians of Southern Boone County Students in Grades 3-8,

Sometime between April 6-10 – depending on each school’s testing schedule – your child will be taking part in the Missouri Assessment Program (MAP). We thought you might like answers to some key questions about this process.

**What tests will be administered in the coming weeks?**

As part of Missouri’s compliance with the federal No Child Left Behind legislation, all students in grades 3-8 are assessed annually in both communication arts and mathematics. Science is assessed once at each grade span of elementary and middle school. Below are the assessments for each grade:

Students in grades 3, 4, 6, & 7: MAP communication arts and MAP mathematics  
Students in grades 5 & 8: MAP communication arts, MAP mathematics, and MAP science

**What is the Missouri Assessment Program (MAP)?**

The Missouri Assessment Program is designed to measure student progress toward meeting the Show-Me Standards, the academic content and process standards that were adopted by the State Board of Education in January, 1996. All Missouri students in grades 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 are required to participate in the Missouri Assessment Program. The results are used to determine a district’s accreditation status and to fulfill requirements of the federal No Child Left Behind legislation. Therefore, our District’s accountability for strong performance on standardized assessments is crucial.

**When will the testing take place?**

The testing will take place during regular school hours, beginning April 6 for all of the district’s schools. The schedule for each school will be different to provide the best testing conditions possible for students. You may wish to contact your child’s school for specific dates. Makeup MAP tests for any absent students will take place before April 17.

**Why do we assess?**

- To inform students, parents, and staff of student progress and achievement;
- To identify students’ relative standings within groups (national, state, grade);
- To assist teachers in making ongoing instructional and curricular decisions;
- To evaluate the success of our curriculum and assist in making appropriate revisions;

To help access and/or allocate resources to meet student needs;  
To provide colleges, universities, and other post-secondary institutions with a profile of our students' achievement;  
To identify the District's standing in comparison to other districts; and  
To provide mandated data to outside monitoring agencies, such as the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, as well as the community at large.

### **What can a parent or guardian do to help his/her child?**

The best preparation for standardized assessments is quality classroom work throughout the year. However, there are a few tips that can make the actual testing experience less stressful for students. Please help your child to:

- Get plenty of rest each night.
- Start each day with a nutritional breakfast.
- Get to school on time.
- Avoid makeup sessions by attending school each day.
- Stress the importance of performing their best.
- Avoid putting too much emphasis on the results.
- Help your child relax as much as possible.
- Remind your child that testing does not mean the school year is over!

### **When will I get the test results and explanation of what the scores mean?**

Since these assessments require evaluation and hand-scoring by the test publishers, the results are not expected until late summer. Information about the scores' meaning will be provided at that time.

### **Are n t high school students tested?**

Missouri has changed its testing program for high school students. Instead of comprehensive subject area tests, such as communication arts in the 11<sup>th</sup> grade or mathematics at the 10<sup>th</sup> grade, new "end of course" examinations will be used. This year, tests for Biology I, English II, and Algebra I will be operational, which means they will "count" for state accountability purposes. Our 8<sup>th</sup> grade students who take Algebra I will also take an end of course exam. Interestingly, the state has encouraged schools to include the "EOC" assessments as part of a student's grade. More information about the end of course exams will be sent to parents in April prior to their administration in late spring.

### **Who could I call with additional questions?**

Your child's teacher or school counselor will have the best information for you about the testing situation for your child. If you have questions with which they cannot help, please call me at 657-2147.

Sincerely,



Carolyn Deffenbaugh  
Assistant Superintendent

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

**To educate by challenging each student to reach full potential in preparing for a changing world.**