



Dear Parents/Guardians:

From April 1 to April 12 students in grades 5-7 will take the Smarter Balanced Assessment in (a) English Language Arts & Literacy and (b) Mathematics. Students in 6th & 7th grade will take the assessments during the week of April 1 and students in 5th grade complete their assessments during the week of April 8. The purpose of this letter is to help in your understanding of the assessment, as well as providing a few ideas for improving your child's preparedness.

The Smarter Balanced assessments measure student achievement of our state's standards in the areas of English Language Arts & Literacy and Mathematics. In addition, score reports will provide information on student performance in the following areas:

- English: Reading, writing, listening, & research
- Math: Concepts and procedures; problem-solving and modeling/data analysis; & communicating reasoning

The assessments are given through an online computer application and are unique in the way they adapt to a student's question responses. This is important as it provides questions that are appropriate for your child's level of learning. As a result, each student has the same opportunity to succeed and maintain a positive attitude towards testing. These assessments are not timed; however, we provide the following times as estimates of assessment duration: (a) English – 3.5 hours and (b) Math – 3 hours.

Student grades will not be impacted by their performance on this assessment, however the assessment does serve as a way for the school to analyze how well we are helping students meet the standards. Shortly after the testing period is complete, you will receive a report showing your child's scores.

There is no need to study in preparation for the assessments. We do, however, ask that students try their best and get plenty of rest the night before testing. It is important for students to come to school on test days. Assessment are required, therefore making up a missed assessment leads to less instructional time and a loss of important learning opportunities.

Online Resources

- Students and parents can access complete Practice Tests in English and Math for grades 3 through 8 and 11 at the student and family assessment portal: <https://sd.portal.airast.org/users/students-and-families/>
- Students and parents can access sample assessment items for all assessment content at the Smarter Balanced sample item webpage: <http://sampleitems.smarterbalanced.org/>

This testing is very important for your child, Stagebarn Middle School and the Meade School District. Thank you for supporting your child and our school during this assessment period. Please contact us if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

David Olson





March 3, 2019

Dear Parents/Guardians,

This spring, all students at SMS will be taking the Smarter Balanced Assessment state test in ELA and Math, with 5th graders also taking the test in Science. This test is used to accurately measure our students' learning as well as help our educators pinpoint areas in need of improvement. These tests provide an academic check-up and are designed to help teachers and parents know whether students are on track to be college- and career-ready by the time they graduate.

6th & 7th graders will begin testing ELA and Math during the week of April 1st. 5th graders will test those same subjects during the week of April 8th and will complete the Science test the following week beginning on April 15th. All testing will take place first thing in the morning, and we will operate a condensed schedule following the testing periods.

As a reward for students who have worked hard throughout the year to improve their test scores, we will be holding a 'fun day' in the spring for students who achieve testing goals. The criteria for the reward day are as follows:

- Achieve a 3 or 4 on the Smarter Balanced Assessment in both ELA and Math (or)
- Move up one level in the NWEA testing on subjects below 3 on SBA (or)
- Achieve a combined double-digit growth on NWEA scores

Student achievement is very important to us, and we would like you to stress the importance of this test at home. We have worked hard to help students make progress throughout the year and have set these realistic goals for students to help give them a little motivation to try hard on the test.

If you have any questions regarding the test or the reward day, please call the school (605-787-4172) or email me at david.olson@k12.sd.us.

Thank you!

David Olson

