



# Beresford School District #61-2

*“Together We Aspire, Act, and Achieve.”*

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March 2nd, 2017

Watchdog Nation,

The purpose of this message is to explain our upcoming spring assessments and share projected dates for our spring assessments.

## **Smarter Balanced Assessments (SBAC) in Reading and Math: Grades 6, 7, 8, and 11**

This spring, South Dakota will continue using an online assessment, called Smarter Balanced, that is based on the state's standards in English language arts and math. This test is administered to students in grades 3-8 and 11. It has replaced the Dakota STEP test in English and math. The test was developed by the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium, a group of 22 states, including South Dakota. More than 100 South Dakota educators served on Smarter Balanced work groups as the test was being developed.

The Smarter Balanced assessment was field tested in spring 2014. That practice run gave our district's teachers and schools a chance to practice test administration procedures, and students the opportunity to experience what will be expected of them on the new assessment. Since the field test, a number of South Dakota educators have served on panels to help set achievement levels for the test.

Delivered entirely online, the Smarter Balanced assessment offers significant improvements over multiple choice, paper-and-pencil tests of the past. Students have the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge in a variety of ways. Writing is required at every grade level, and performance tasks ask students to demonstrate an array of research, writing and problem solving skills. This variety in test items means test results will provide a more meaningful picture of what students know and can do. The test also offers expanded accessibility features to better meet the needs of all students.

All six of South Dakota's public universities accept Smarter Balanced scores as evidence of students' readiness for credit-bearing coursework in English and math (the same way ACT scores can be used). High school students' performance levels on the Smarter Balanced assessment are listed on the Infinite Campus Board of Regents transcript. Scores at Levels 3 and 4 qualify students for entry-level, credit-bearing courses and exempt them from remedial courses. If you are interested in viewing a short video clip from the South Dakota Department of Education regarding readiness and the SBAC assessments, select the following link: <https://youtu.be/MgpE1wfhTdc>.

## **Dakota STEP Science: Grades 8 and 11**

Within the next few weeks, your child (in grades eight and eleven) will be taking the South Dakota State Test of Educational Progress (*Dakota STEP*) Science Test. The *Dakota STEP Science* is the assessment for students in grades 5, 8 and 11. Test questions are used to assess the South Dakota State Content Standards in science at grades 5, 8, and 11. The *Dakota STEP Science* test is also online.

This type of test can only give certain kinds of information about how your child is doing in school. To get a more complete picture, you also need to know how your child performs on other tests the teacher gives, daily class work, homework, and other activities. The attached chart lists some suggestions that both you and your child can do to help prepare him or her to take the *Dakota STEP Science* and other tests.

## HOW TO PREPARE YOUR CHILD TO TAKE A TEST

Here are some things <u>your child</u> can do:	Here are some things <u>you</u> can do:
REST -Get a good night of sleep before the test.	DISCUSS -Help your child understand that these assessments gives him or her the chance to show what he or she knows about a subject.
EAT -Eat a good breakfast.	SUPPORT -Ask your child to maintain regular study habits. Do not ask your child to give extra study time for the upcoming assessments. The tests cover more schoolwork than your child can learn in a few extra hours.
LISTEN -Listen carefully to the directions given for the test and follow them exactly. If the directions are not clear, ask the teacher to repeat them or to explain them.	RELAX -Students who are calm and sure of themselves do better on tests.
TRY -Do your best and do not give up.	

### Projected Testing Events:

- Middle School Testing
  - Smarter Balanced Assessments (grades 6, 7, and 8) and Dakota-STEP Science (grade 8 only)
    - SBAC ELA and Math -Week of April 3rd, 2017
    - Science -April 12th and April 13th, 2017 (grade 8 only)
- High School Testing
  - Juniors -Smarter Balanced Assessments and Dakota-STEP Science
    - BHS (juniors) testing dates:
      - Session 1 -Math Content (10:30-12:09) on 4-10-2017
      - Session 2 -Math Performance and Math content make-ups (8:17-9:50) on 4-11-2017
      - Session 3 -ELA Content (1:30-3:00) on 4-12-2017
      - Session 4 -ELA Performance and make-up (10:30-12:09) on 4-13-2017
      - Science Testing (1:30-3:00) on 4-19-2017
  - Seniors -National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC)
    - Subtests -Applied Mathematics, Locating Information, and Reading for Information
      - 3-29-2017 -NCRC (8:30-11:30 a.m.)
    - The NCRC is a an opportunity for us to determine how we prepare our students for the workforce while providing our students with an opportunity to earn an additional credential as they begin their post-BHS life. To learn more about this opportunity, select the following link:  
<http://www.act.org/content/act/en/products-and-services/workforce-solutions/act-national-career-readiness-certificate/about-act-national-career-readiness-certificate.html>.

Respectfully,



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6-12 Principal