



Crater School of Business Innovation Science

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Dear Parent/Guardian,

With the 2016-2017 school year well under way, I wanted to take a moment to provide some important information about this year's state tests.

Students around Oregon take state tests in English Language Arts and Math, called Smarter Balanced. The tests moved away from previous fill-in-the bubble exams that focused on rote memorization, to a format which asks students to explain their reasoning and write out their answers. These new tests measure more complex, real-world skills such as critical-thinking, writing, and problem solving so that your child can successfully transition from grade to grade and can be prepared for his or her next steps after high school.

Crater BIS will give Smarter Balanced tests from April 17-June 9. The tests are not timed so your child can take as long as he or she needs to fully demonstrate what he or she knows and can do.

We know that an end-of-the-year test cannot possibly tell us *everything* about your child's academic progress. However, the results do act as a snapshot of your child's strengths and areas for improvement and can be used as a way to ensure he or she is getting the supports he or she needs. Additionally, the tests help Central Point School District's efforts to equitably distribute resources and support student learning. When fewer students take the test, we are left with an incomplete and inaccurate picture of how our students are performing, and this limits our ability to address issues, better serve students, and continue to improve our educational system.

For high school students, it is a graduation requirement to meet Essential Skills either through tests such as Smarter Balanced or through other means such as multiple work samples in multiple subject areas. Should a student opt out of testing, the student will most likely lose the option to select electives and will be placed into essential skills courses in which the required work samples are done for graduation. Please note that BIS has an exceptionally high passage rate using the Smarter Balanced test as a means for students to meet the graduation requirement of Essential Skills.

If you have questions or concerns about these tests, I encourage you to talk to your child's teacher or myself before opting out. Should you wish to opt your child out, you may pick up the form at the Central Point School District Office. Please submit the completed form to Sue Barlow in the main office of BIS. You can read more about your rights to opt-out here: <http://tinyurl.com/OR-HB2655>.

Sincerely,

Tiffany Slaughter, Principal
Crater School of Business, Innovation and Science