

April 16, 2008

Dear Parents/Guardians of 2nd Grade Students,

Throughout the school year, teachers assess how second graders are progressing in all areas of study, using assessments and performance tasks that match our instructional materials. This information is used to formulate report cards and the instructional decisions teachers make to help students continue to make progress. In addition to these ongoing assessments, it is a promising practice to use a standardized test to take a snapshot of student progress and gather information about how our second graders are progressing across topics and standards. To provide us this kind of information, we have selected a test called the Terra Novas.

The Terra Novas, will be administered to 2nd grade students in several parts from April 20th to April 28th. Make-ups will be given during the weeks April 27th and May 4th.

Test Overview

The literacy components of the test measure the skills and knowledge specified in the ELA Learning Standards, including vocabulary, word analysis, reading, and language usage. The mathematics components of the test measure the skills and conceptual knowledge specified in the NYS Learning Standards, including math concepts and computation. The test includes both multiple choice and open response questions.

Purpose of the Test

- To measure students' knowledge and overall achievement
- To measure students' mastery of specific concepts and skills
- To provide information that can be used to evaluate the effectiveness of our instructional programs
- To provide information to parents related to their child's academic performance

Our balanced literacy language arts and standards-based, constructivist mathematics programs have prepared our students well for this assessment. We have also worked with children to make sure that they are comfortable with the format of the test. Please understand that students should not feel that they need to study for this test. While no single assessment provides a complete picture of a student's performance, this test, in combination with your child's performance on grade level and teacher-developed assessments, provides a profile of his or her achievement. Individual student results should be available in June.

Please make sure that your child gets a good night's sleep and a healthy breakfast in preparation for each day of assessment. Of course, these practices are both highly recommended as part of a consistent routine.

If you have any questions, please call or e-mail me or your child's teacher.

Sincerely,

Meghan Fitzgerald
Principal