



Brookfield Public Schools

HUCKLEBERRY HILL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

www.brookfield.k12.ct.us

Mary Rose Dymond
Principal

Julie Scheithe
Assistant Principal

February 19, 2015

Dear Parent or Guardian,

This spring students in grades 3-8 and 11 will take the Smarter Balanced Assessments (SBAC) in English Language Arts and mathematics. These assessments are delivered online and are aligned to the Common Core State Standards. The assessments will provide information for parents and teachers that will guide decisions and instruction to ensure that all students are on a successful track. Huckleberry Hill students will take the SBAC in May. When the specific dates have been finalized they will be communicated with everyone.

Both the Common Core State Standards, known in Connecticut as the CT Core Standards, and the Smarter Balanced Assessments have gone through an extensive development process that included teachers, parents, and educational experts. The end result is a high-quality system of assessments that can inform teachers and help all students succeed—regardless of disability, language, or background.

The Smarter Balanced Assessments will replace the Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT) and Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT) in reading, writing, and mathematics. The new assessments offer significant improvements over paper-based tests of the past, including: new question types; writing at every grade; expanded accessibility features to meet the needs of all students; and performance tasks that ask students to demonstrate an array of research, writing, and problem solving skills.

Since the new assessments measure higher standards, the definition of grade-level performance is also more rigorous than it was with old tests. For the first couple of years, our students will most likely be adjusting to these new assessments. It is important to note that this does not mean that students are doing worse than in previous years, but rather, that students are being assessed by more challenging academic standards than before. Results should improve as students have additional years of instruction aligned to the new standards and become better equipped to meet the challenges they present. We are committed to working with students and parents to provide support for all students to succeed.

To comply with federal and state statutes, participation in the Smarter Balanced Assessments is required. Please note that Smarter Balanced will adhere to all federal and state privacy laws, including but not limited to Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Also by federal and state law, assessment is required in science in grade 5, grade 8 and grade 10. Students in these grades will take either the CMT Science or CAPT Science assessment.

For additional information about the Smarter Balanced Assessments in our district, please visit www.brookfieldps.org. You can also learn more on the Students and Families page of the Connecticut Smarter Balanced Assessment Portal at <http://ct.portal.airast.org> and at the Smarter Balanced website, <http://www.smarterbalanced.org>.

We will be having SBAC Informational Sessions for parents/guardians on Wednesday, March 11 at 6:30 PM and Thursday, March 12 at 9:30 AM (during the PTO meeting). At the sessions we will describe the skills that will be assessed, share information about the structure of the assessment and the kinds of questions that will be asked, and guide you through the practice assessment. Bring your tablet, Chromebook, or laptop with you to access the on-line practice test right in the session! (Please note, you cannot access the practice tests via your phone.)

If you have any questions regarding your child's participation, please contact me at dymondm@brookfieldps.org or 203-775-7675.

Sincerely,

Mary Rose Dymond