Dear Parents/Guardians:

Starting this school year, our state’s learning standards are now aligned to the Common Core State Standards in math and English language arts. The transition began when State Superintendent Randy Dorn adopted the new standards in 2011. Each school district has been making the transition according to what works best for their teachers and students.

New state standards mean new state tests. Washington is participating in the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC), along with 23 other states. It is a state-led consortium working to develop next-generation assessments that accurately measure student progress toward college- and career-readiness.

This spring students in grade 11 will take the new Smarter Balanced tests in math and English language arts. Demonstrating mastery will result in students who attend community colleges in Washington state being placed directly into college courses rather than taking a community college placement exam.

Students in grade 10 will take the English language arts exit exam instead of the High School Proficiency Exam (HSPE) as part of the transition to the new Smarter Balanced tests. Meeting standard on this exam is a graduation requirement.

The new learning standards are more challenging than the standards they replaced. Some students who were considered proficient using the old standards will have a more difficult time reaching proficiency using the new standards. The results from these new tests will give a more accurate picture of whether students are on track to be college or career ready after high school.

Our school is scheduled to take the tests **May 19-21 and May 26-28**.

For more information about the Smarter Balanced tests and to try out a practice test yourself, please visit [www.k12.wa.us/smarter](http://www.k12.wa.us/smarter). More information about the Common Core may be found at [www.k12.wa.us/corestandards](http://www.k12.wa.us/corestandards).

Thank you for continuing to work with us to make sure your child is successful. Please let us know if there is anything we can do to better support your child. We want your child to leave us with a solid foundation of skills and a future full of opportunities.

Sincerely,

James Campbell

Vice Principal

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